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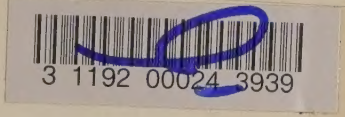

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NOV 8 1988		AUG 11 2004	
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JAN 9 1992			
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DEC 15 1995			
MAY 18 1996			
MAR 6 - 1999			

Inc. 38-293

THERE WERE GIANTS

LIFTING HIM ON ONE SHOULDER AND A LARGE BAG OF GOLD ON THE OTHER, HE SET OUT FOR THE PALACE.

THERE WERE GIANTS

Compiled by Kathleen Adams
& Frances Elizabeth Atchinson
Decorations by Lois Lenski

1957
Dodd, Mead & Company
New York

Copyright, 1929
By Dodd, Mead and Company, Inc.

Printed in the United States of America
By The Vail-Ballou Press, Inc., Binghamton, N. Y.

To

ELBERT C. ADAMS

THE BEST OF BROTHERS
AND THE BEST OF FRIENDS

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We wish to thank the following for use of copyrighted material: Harper and Brothers for "The Three Little Pigs and the Ogre" from THE WONDER CLOCK by Howard Pyle; The Century Company for "The Giant Who Rode on the Ark" from A BOOK OF FRIENDLY GIANTS by Eunice Fuller; Charles Scribner's Sons for "Derido; or, the Giant's Quilt" from THE FLOATING PRINCE by Frank R. Stockton; Little, Brown and Company for "The Giant of the Black Mountains" from THE OAK-TREE FAIRY BOOK by Clifton Johnson; to Dodd, Mead and Company for "Thor's Wonderful Journey" from NORSE STORIES by Hamilton Wright Mabie and "The Fountain of Giant Land" from TALES OF GIANTS FROM BRAZIL by Elsie Spicer Eels; Doubleday, Doran and Company for "The Hero Twins" from TALES FROM SILVERLANDS by Charles Finger, copyrighted, 1924, by Doubleday, Page and Company, and reprinted by permission of Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc., Publishers; and M. A. Donohue and Company for "Grim Griffin" from the PALMER COX'S JUVENILE BUDGET.

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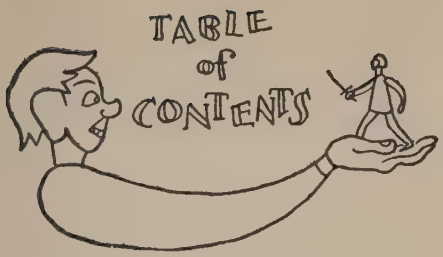
KATHLEEN ADAMS
FRANCES ELIZABETH ATCHINSON

March, 1929.
Baltimore, Maryland.

BEWARE!

Read no farther in this book if you are of faint courage. For you will presently come face to face with fellows so huge you can scarcely see all of them. Some laugh and some roar, and some will try to carry you off. But do not fear. Securely imprisoned in black words on white paper—here are GIANTS!



PAGE

THE THREE LITTLE PIGS AND THE OGRE 1

THE GIANT WHO RODE ON THE ARK 11

DERIDO; OR, THE GIANT'S QUILT 25

GRIM GRIFFIN 54

THE GIANT POT-EAR 60

POUCINET 67

THE GIANT OF THE BLACK MOUNTAINS 94

THE THREE GOLDEN APPLES 102

PANTAGRUEL 133

THE GIANT'S STAIRS 143

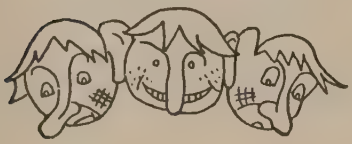
THE FOUNTAIN OF GIANT LAND 153

YVONNE AND FINETTE 164

THOR'S WONDERFUL JOURNEY 207

THE HERO TWINS 223

List of Illustrations



Lifting him on one shoulder and a large bag of gold on the other, he set out for the palace . . *Frontispiece*

FACING PAGE

"But how shall I know when your dresses are done?" . 40

At last he came to the garden of the fifty giants . . . 98

"Let us fly!" cried Finette 180

THE THREE LITTLE PIGS AND THE OGRE

THERE were three nice, fat little pigs. The first was small, the second was smaller, and the third was the smallest of all. And these three little pigs thought of going out into the woods to gather acorns, for there were better acorns there than here.

"There's a great ogre who lives over yonder in the woods," says the barn-yard cock.

"And he will eat you up, body and bones," says the speckled hen.

"And there will be an end of you," says the black drake.

"If folks only knew what was good for them, they would stay at home and make the best of what they had there," said the old gray goose who laid eggs under the barn, and who had never gone out into the world or had had a peep of it beyond the garden gate.

But no; the little pigs would go out into the world, whether or no; "for," said they, "if we stay at home because folks shake their heads, we will never get the best acorns that are to be had"; and there was more than one barley-corn of truth in that chaff, I can tell you.

So out into the woods they went.

They hunted for acorns here and they hunted for acorns there, and by and by whom should the smallest of all the little pigs meet but the great, wicked ogre himself.

"Aha!" says the great, wicked ogre, "it is a nice, plump little pig that I have been wanting for my supper this many a day past. So you may just come along with me now."

"Oh, Master Ogre," squeaked the smallest of the little pigs in the smallest of voices—"oh, Master Ogre, don't eat me! There's a bigger pig back of me, and he will be along presently."

So the ogre let the smallest of the little pigs go, for he would rather have a larger pig if he could get it.

By and by came the second little pig. "Aha!" says the great, wicked ogre, "I have been wanting just such a little pig as you for my supper for this many a day past. So you may just come along with me now."

"Oh, Master Ogre," said the middle-sized pig, in his

middle-sized voice, "don't take me for your supper; there's a bigger pig than I am coming along presently. Just wait for him."

Well, the ogre was satisfied to do that; so he waited, and by and by, sure enough, came the largest of the little pigs.

"And now," says the great, wicked ogre, "I will wait no longer, for you are just the pig I want for my supper, and so you may march along with me."

But the largest of the little pigs had his wits about him, I can tell you. "Oh, very well," says he; "if I am the shoe that fits there is no use in hunting for another; only, have you a roasted apple to put in my mouth when I am cooked? for no one ever heard of a little pig brought on the table without a roast apple in its mouth."

No; the ogre had no roasted apple.

Dear, dear! that was a great pity. If he would wait for a little while, the largest of the little pigs would run home and fetch one, and then things would be as they should.

Yes, the ogre was satisfied with that. So off ran the little pig, and the ogre sat down on a stone and waited for him.

Well, he waited and he waited and he waited and he waited, but not a tip of a hair of the little pig did

he see that day, as you can guess without my telling you.

And Tommy Pfouce tells me that the great, wicked ogre is not the only one who has gone without either pig or roast apple, because when he could get the one he would not take it without the other.

"And now," says the cock and the speckled hen and the black drake and the old gray goose who laid her eggs under the barn, and had never been out into the world beyond the garden-gate—"and now perhaps you will run out into the world and among ogres no more. Are there not good enough acorns at home?"

Perhaps there were; but that was not what the three little pigs thought. "See, now," said the smallest of the three little pigs, "if one is afraid of the water, one will never catch any fish. I, for one, am going out into the woods to get a few acorns."

So out into the woods he went, and there he found all of the acorns that he wanted. But, on his way home, whom should he meet but the great, wicked ogre.

"Aha!" says the ogre, "and is that you?"

Oh, yes, it was nobody else; but had the ogre come across three fellows tramping about in the woods down yonder?

No, the ogre had met nobody in the woods that day.

"Dear, dear," says the smallest little pig, "but that

is a pity, for those three fellows were three wicked robbers, and they have just hidden a meal-bag full of money in that hole up in the tree yonder."

You can guess how the ogre pricked up his ears at this, and how he stared till his eyes were as big as saucers.

"Just wait," said he to the smallest little pig, "and I will be down again in a minute." So he laid his jacket to one side and up the tree he climbed, for he wanted to find that bag of money, and he meant to have it.

"Do you find the hole?" says the smallest of the little pigs.

Yes; the ogre had found the hole.

"And do you find the money?" says the smallest of the little pigs.

No; the ogre could find no money.

"Then good-by," says the smallest of the little pigs, and off he trotted home, leaving the ogre to climb down the tree again as he chose.

"And now, at least, you will go out into the woods no more," says the cock, the speckled hen, the black drake, and the gray goose.

Oh, well, there was no telling what the three little pigs would do yet, they would have to wait and see.

One day it was the middle-sized little pig who

would go out into the woods, for he also had a mind to taste the acorns there.

So out into the woods the middle-sized little pig went, and there he had all the acorns that he wanted.

But by and by the ogre came along. "Aha!" says he. "Now I have you for sure and certain."

But the middle-sized little pig just stood and looked at a great rock just in front of him, with all of his might and main. "Sh-h-h-h-h-h!" says he, "I am not to be talked to or bothered now!"

Hoity-toity! Here was a pretty song, to be sure! And why was the middle-sized pig not to be talked to? That was what the ogre should like to know.

Oh, the middle-sized little pig was looking at what was going on under the great rock yonder, for he could see the little folk brewing more beer than thirty-seven men could drink.

So! Why, the ogre would like to see that for himself.

"Very well," says the middle-sized little pig, "there is nothing easier than to learn that trick! just take a handful of leaves from yonder bush and rub them over your eyes, and then shut them tight and count fifty."

Well, the ogre would have a try at that. So he gathered a handful of the leaves and rubbed them over his eyes, just as the middle-sized pig had said.

"And now are you ready?" said the middle-sized little pig.

Yes; the ogre was ready.

"Then shut your eyes and count," said the middle-sized little pig.

So the ogre shut them as tightly as he could and began to count, "One, two, three, four, five," and so on; and while he was counting, why, the little pig was running away home again.

By and by the ogre bawled out "Fifty!!!" and opened his eyes, for he was done. Then he saw not more, but less, than he had seen before, for the little pig was not there.

And now it was the largest of the three little pigs who began to talk about going out into the woods to look for acorns.

"You had better stay at home and take things as they come. The crock that goes often to the well gets broken at last;" that was what the cock, the speckled hen, the black drake, and the gray goose said; and they thought themselves very wise to talk as they did.

But no; the little pig wanted to go out into the woods, and into the woods the little pig would go, ogre or no ogre.

After he had eaten all of the acorns that he wanted he began to think of going home again, but just then

the ogre came stumping along. "Aha!" says he, "we have met again, have we?"

"Yes," said the largest of the three little pigs, "we have. And I want to say that I could find no roast apple at home, and so I did not come back again."

Yes, yes, that was all very fine; but they should have a settling of old scores now. The largest of the three little pigs might just come along home with the ogre, and to-morrow he should be made into sausages; for there was to be no trickery this time, so there was an end of the matter.

Come, come! the ogre must not be too testy. There was such a thing as having too much pepper in the pudding—that was what the largest of the little pigs said. If it were sausages that the ogre was after, maybe the pig could help him. Over home at the farm yonder was a storehouse filled with more sausages and good things than two men could count. There was a window where the ogre could just squeeze through. Only he must promise to eat what he wanted and to carry nothing away with him.

Well, the ogre promised to eat all he wanted in the storehouse, and then off they went together.

By and by they came to the storehouse at the farm, and there, sure enough, was a window, and it was

just large enough for the ogre to squeeze through without a button to spare in the size.

Dear, dear! how the ogre did stuff himself with the sausages and puddings and other good things in the storehouse.

By and by the little pig bawled out as loud as he could, "Have you had enough yet?"

"Hush-sh-sh-sh-sh-sh-sh!" says the ogre, "don't talk so loud, or you'll be rousing the folks and having them about our ears like a hive of bees."

"No," bawled the little pig, louder than before, "but tell me, have you had enough yet?"

"Yes, yes," says the ogre, "I have had almost enough, only be still about it!"

"Very well!" bawled the little pig, as loud as he could, "if you have had enough, and if you have eaten all of the sausages and all of the puddings you can stuff, it is about time that you were going, for here comes the farmer and two of his men to see what all the stir is about."

And, sure enough, the farmer and his men were coming as fast as they could lay foot to the ground.

But when the ogre heard them coming, he felt sure that it was time that he was getting away home again, and so he tried to get out of the same window that he

had gotten in a little while before. But he had stuffed himself with so much of the good things that he had swelled like everything, and there he stuck in the storehouse window like a cork in a bottle, and could budge neither one way nor the other; and that was a pretty pickle to be in.

"Oho!" says the farmer, "you were after my sausages and my puddings, were you? Then you will come no more."

And that was so; for when the farmer and his men were done with the ogre he never went into the woods again, for he could not.

As for the three little pigs, they trotted away into the woods every day of their lives, for there was nobody nowadays to stop them from gathering all the acorns that they wanted.

Now, don't you believe folks when they say that this is all stuff and nonsense that I have been telling you; for if you turn it upside down and look in the bottom of it you will find that there is more than one grain of truth there; that is if you care to scratch among the chaff for it. And that is the end of this story.

THE GIANT WHO RODE ON THE ARK

Ever since the beginning of things there have been giants. But the first ones of all we know little about. For, oddly enough, they were so big that no one ever really saw them.

Back in Adam and Eve's time, and even for many years after, there were very few people; and instead of being all over the earth as people are now, they lived quite close together in a very small country. Among them lived the giants, tremendous fellows, bigger than the highest mountains, and so tall that if you leaned back until your neck ached you could not see to the top of one of them. Half the time, at any rate, their heads were hidden above the clouds, so it would have done you but little good to look. It was almost never that you could see the whole of a giant at once.

But even if one of Adam's grandchildren had seen

all of a giant, it would have caused him little surprise. For everything was new in those days, and one thing seemed no stranger than another. As it was, people scrambled about over the giants' feet every day and thought only that they were climbing some new kind of hill. As for the giants themselves, going about with their heads above the clouds, and their eyes fixed on the stars and sun, they had not the slightest idea of the little people crawling about at their feet. Even when unknowingly they stepped on a whole house, they were none the wiser.

And so it might have gone on, the people knowing nothing of the giants, and the giants knowing nothing of the people until this day, had it not been for the Flood.

The first giant, and the biggest of all, was called Chalbroth. Mountains were but hummocks to him. When he was thirsty he stooped and drank from the clouds. When he was hungry he caught a whale and held it up before the sun to toast. And he strode about the world three thousand years without so much as dreaming of the tiny race of men. No more did his son or grandson. That was left for his great-grandson, Hurtali.

Hurtali was not so tall as his great-grandfather, but he was a fairly good-sized giant, a mile or so high, and

quite big enough to take care of himself. And that was fortunate, for Hurtali was an orphan, without brothers or sisters. However, he did not mind that much, for there were plenty of good games he could play alone. In the morning, when he got up, he would take a little run across country, playing leapfrog with the smaller mountains on the way. Then he would wade out into the middle of the ocean till he found a place deep enough for him, and swim a few thousand miles before breakfast. When he wanted a quicker bath, all he had to do was to step into a thick cloud, and out into the dry sunlight on the other side. There was endless fun to be had with the clouds, anyhow: blowing the little ones about, and cutting up the thin ones with his fingers into all kinds of shapes,—whales and mountains and trees and giants. Then when he got tired of them, he would run and wave his arms and blow, and scatter the whole lot of them helter-skelter.

The nice part was, that no matter how thick the clouds got, Hurtali was always able to climb a mountain and stick his head through into the pleasant weather above. But every position has its disadvantages, and it must be confessed that when a sizeable thunderstorm came snapping about his ears, he was quite as glad to lie down in a valley and go to sleep.

As for the rain, he seldom felt it at all, although sometimes when it came down in sheets it would seem to him that there was a heavy mist.

And that was why, when the Flood came, it lasted for a week or so before Hurtali took the slightest notice of it. It had rained for days and days. The rivers rose and rose until finally in one great torrent they went sweeping over all the land, and drowned every man and woman and child and bird and beast in the whole world, except those that were lucky enough to be with Noah in his Ark. Even the eagles came dropping through the air last of all, beaten down by the rain, and fell like sparrows about Hurtali's feet. But Hurtali regarded it not at all. He sat on a high mountain, head and shoulders in the bright sunlight above the clouds, and whistled serenely.

Going across country, to be sure, it was a little sloppy. But Hurtali liked that, and ran splashing along with the greatest glee in the world. One day, when he got to the place where the ocean used to begin, all the water suddenly rolled up before him in a wave as high as he was, and cast itself back again with a roar and a rush that swept the land clear of trees for miles and miles. Hurtali laughed aloud, and plunged into the foam. He shouted, he dived, he turned somersaults. He swam

and swam, and then, quite tired out, turned to start for home.

Then he looked about puzzled. There was no land in sight. Not an island, not a hill,—nothing but water as far as he could see. He swam harder. Finally a sharp point appeared on the horizon. He made for it, and as he drew nearer he saw it clearly. It was a single, jagged mountain-peak. He put one foot down and touched bottom. He could walk now, although the water was above his waist. Uprooted forests tripped his toes, and he slipped desperately over slimy hills onto scratchy cliffs.

All in all, it was not a pleasant walk, and when Hurtali finally settled himself on his rather uncomfortable mountain and began to pick the crags out of his feet, he was in anything but a happy frame of mind. He was tired and hungry and he had not seen a whale all day. Worse still, how was he going to sleep at night? There was not a plain in the whole world where he could lie down without drowning; and as for the mountain-top, it was much too small.

Hurtali bent down, picked a handful of trees and ate them moodily. Then an ingenious idea struck him. If he could not lie flat why not go to sleep reclining? He could stretch himself along the mountain, with his

head at the top and his feet in the water below. He scrambled half way down to try it, and leaned carelessly back. In an instant he was up again, howling with pain. Hundreds of precipices had stuck into his back, and he had laid his head squarely on an ice-field.

Hurtali was infuriated. He was not so easily to be foiled. He plucked out cliff after cliff in his rage and hurled them splashing into the water. With one of them he pounded madly on the glacier, sending ice-splinters in a bright fountain skywards. By nightfall he had cleared the mountain. He lay back, propping himself with a cliff or two on either side to keep from rolling over into the water. Then wearily he opened his mouth and snored to high heaven.

All of a sudden, Hurtali awoke. Somewhere there was a noise that disturbed him. It was the queerest noise anyway. It seemed to be made up of a hundred small sounds. It was a twittering, a rustling, a chirping, and a tiny screaming all at once.

"Just my luck!" thought Hurtali sleepily. "I've gone and laid my head in a whole colony of eagles' nests."

Then he rubbed his eyes open. It was morning, and what felt so cold around his neck was water. It had risen until it had covered him up in the night.

But the noise kept on. It did not seem to have the

slightest intention of stopping. The wider awake Hurtali grew, the louder it seemed to become. It did not sound at all like eagles any more, and it seemed to come from somewhere very near his left ear. Hurtali turned over on his side. There, stuck on the rocks he had piled up, was a tremendous wooden box, almost as long as he was himself. The ends floated in the water, but the middle was wedged firmly on the rocky shelf. It was from that the noises came.

Hurtali raised himself on one elbow and put his ear against the box. Inside, hundreds of little creatures seemed to be moving about. There were steps and stampings, small roars and tiny shrieks, flutterings and callings, barkings and bleatings innumerable. It was Noah's Ark waking up for the day, but of course Hurtali did not know that. He listened, fascinated.

Just then a window in the side shot open, and four men with four poles, leaning out, began to push against the rock with all their strength. Hurtali gasped. Never in all his life had he seen such tiny creatures. He watched breathlessly as they braced themselves and struggled. But the harder they pushed, the firmer the Ark seemed to stick.

Now, Hurtali was a kind-hearted giant, and while he could not but chuckle to see the little people struggling at a task so much too big for them, his first

thought was to help them out. So he put out both his great hands and pushed against the side of the Ark. But the Ark was stuck too fast even for that, and instead of sliding off into the water with Hurtali's shoves, it tossed first on one side and then on the other, and so rocked violently back and forth. And with that there arose such a scrambling and scratching as never was heard before, as the animals rolled about inside. Elephants trumpeted, cows mooed, donkeys brayed, eagles screamed, dogs barked, lions roared, pigs squealed, wolves howled, orang-outangs chattered.

As for Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, who had been pushing, their eyes had been so fast fixed on their poles that they did not see the giant's arm at all, and thought the whole commotion due to their own efforts.

But when Hurtali saw that he could not budge the Ark that way, he scrambled up out of the water with splashes that set the craft seesawing. Then, throwing one leg across, he jumped on top, as a man mounts a horse. And sitting there astraddle, he pushed with his foot against the cliff,—once, twice, three times. And with the third push the Ark sailed off suddenly, with Hurtali sitting atop.

It was a new experience for Hurtali, and he laughed with his whole voice. In all his life he had never been

on any kind of boat before, and this one was so jolly. It went wabbling about over the waves with queer splashes and gurglings. Hurtali swung his legs and roared out a giant-song. Once in a while his toes would strike against a half drowned mountain, and then he would push with all his might to keep his big craft off the rocks.

All at once, Hurtali was conscious of a change. Inside the Ark everything was strangely quiet. Not a roar, not a bark, not even a squeal disturbed the stillness. Just in front of him on the roof was a chimney. He put his ear down. There was a sound, but it was faint and different. It rose and fell with contented regularity. It was a low, munching, crunching sound, as if the hundreds of little creatures were moving their jaws up and down all at once.

A sympathetic twinge shot through Hurtali. He remembered suddenly and definitely that he had had no breakfast. He sat up and scanned the water for whales. Just then a noise came up the chimney as if some of the little beings were gathered there shouting and stamping. Hurtali looked. At the bottom stood the men he had seen before at the window. With them was a curious four-legged beast with a long neck that stretched up the chimney to the very top. The men spoke to the creature. Slowly it bent its head, and one

of the men clambered up on it. Then with infinite deliberation it stretched its neck out again, carrying the man to the very top of the chimney.

Hurtali straightened up in surprise. But the little man did not seem in the least alarmed or afraid. He grasped the edge of the chimney and cautiously climbed out on it. Then he turned toward Hurtali and bowed low. He was an old man with a thin white beard that reached nearly to his feet, and he wore a tremendous turban wound and re-wound about his head.

Noah sharply clapped his hands. The giraffe's nose appeared again in the chimney, stacked up with bowls of food. One by one, Noah removed them and set them down, with a bow, on the roof before Hurtali. Then, with the same slow gravity, he mounted himself again on the giraffe's head and started to descend as he had come.

Hurtali was dumb with surprise. But he had been brought up to be polite. So, just as Noah disappeared through the chimney, he gasped out a "Thank you," which was pretty weak for a giant, but which boomed through the Ark, and set all the animals to squealing, nevertheless.

Then he turned to the food. There were two sheep and a cow, with a bowl of pottage and a dish of honey

for dessert. Hurtali disposed of them all in just three mouthfuls, and looked about for more.

Then it occurred to him that the little people were not used to a giant's appetite; and, being a polite giant as we have said, he determined to get along without telling them. He turned his eyes to the water again, and before dinner he caught twenty-five good-sized whales which he fastened up behind him on the roof where Noah could not see them.

Days went by, and still the waters rose. There was not a dry mountain-peak on the whole earth. Hurtali could not even feel one with his toes. Sometimes, when the water was clear, he could dimly see one, hundreds of feet below. Usually, however, the water was ruffled. The wind blew, and the waves dashed up over the Ark, often to Hurtali's waist. Streams of mist seemed to be trickling through his hair and down his cheeks, and for the first time in his life he got the idea that it was raining. His legs were cold and numb, and he felt uncommonly stiff in every joint.

By day things were not so bad. For Hurtali could hear the little creatures racing about inside the Ark, screaming and scolding, jumping and playing, lowing and howling and squeaking. But at night when they were all asleep, it was more than lonesome. It was black

with a blackness Hurtali had never known before; and the wind whistled through his hair and chilled his arms, and sometimes beat against him till he nearly fell over into the water. Somehow he managed to keep his seat, and the gray morning comforted him. Three times every day the giraffe reached up food to him, and three times Hurtali would send back by it the dishes of the meal before, and then reach cautiously behind him for a whale.

So, time went on, until one day Hurtali noticed a brightness in the sky. The mist no longer streamed over his face. The waters were still. Up in the brightest cloud, he could make out a round, shining disk. Then Hurtali knew that it was clearing off, and he shouted down the chimney with almost all his voice, "The sun! The sun!"

A few days later he felt something hard and jagged with his foot. It was a mountain, and he knew that the waters were going down. Soon peaks began to appear like sharp teeth all about them on the horizon; and one day, far off, Hurtali saw one that was soft and green. Then he put forth all his strength. He paddled with his feet like a duck and sent the Ark straight and sure for that mountain. Hurtali put out his foot and touched the land. Then, very gently, he set the Ark safe and dry upon the top of Mount Ararat.

Hurtali stood up and stretched his tired, cramped limbs. He capered stiffly. He flung his arms about. He shouted with all his lungs.

And still the waters fell. By night the whole mountain was dry, and Hurtali lay back and slept as he had not since the Flood. The next day, Noah himself came out on the Ark roof to ask Hurtali if the Flood was over and if he might safely let his creatures free.

Hurtali stood upon the mountain-peak and overlooked the whole world. As far as he could see were dry hills and green meadows, and the seas and rivers were back again in their beds.

So, Noah went back into the Ark; and Hurtali with one sweep of his mighty hand ripped off the whole roof from end to end. And from the Ark, in a bright flutter, went up all the birds of the air into the sunlight. Red, green, blue, white, and gold they glittered,—parrots and eagles, robins and doves, hawks and geese, blue-jays and tanagers, crows and flamingoes, all together in one feathery swarm, out into the blue sky.

Then Hurtali went to the end of the Ark, where all the animals were gathered about the door, bleating aloud to heaven. With one tug he snatched away the door; and, scurrying, scuffling, scratching, burrowing under, scrambling over, the beasts burst forth. Bears bounded, squirrels frisked, pigs bolted, hyenas leaped,

horses galloped, mice scampered, camels hopped, cats whisked, all in one wild stampede out of the Ark into the free air. After them rushed Shem and Ham and Japheth with their wives; and, last of all, Mr. and Mrs. Noah, who being quite old and grown-up, tried to go as sedately as if they had been walking on dry land every day.

Flinging up his arms to the high clouds, Hurtali went leaping across the fair earth, taking the valleys at a bound, and racing over the mountains as if they had not been.—All at once, he paused! The sky seemed suddenly radiant with a soft brightness. Across a cloud, directly before him, glowed an arch of lovely colors. It was more beautiful than anything he had ever seen, and it made him feel happy and elated without quite knowing why. Somehow it seemed to him that now his dear mountains and valleys would always be safe and green as they had been before. And so, bending his head, Hurtali ran out across the world, underneath the Rainbow.

DERIDO; OR, THE GIANT'S QUILT

THERE was once a giant who had a patch-work quilt, and this is the way he got it:

One warm morning, the giant, whose name was Derido, was very tired, and lay down under a tree to take a nap. The tree was a palm-tree, and, having a great tuft of leaves at the top of a tall stem, it could not be expected to give enough shade for a full-sized giant; but Derido, when he lay down, put his head in the small spot of shade that the palm-leaves afforded, and as for the rest of his body, he did not care. After a while, the sun got higher and higher, and the spot of shade moved nearer and nearer the base of the tree, and poor Derido's upturned face was soon exposed to the full blaze of the fiery sun. But being very tired, he slept soundly, and knew nothing about either sunshine or shade.

Derido was a good, kind, honorable giant—not very old, but large for his age, and had been noted, from the time when he was a very little boy, no bigger than a horse, for being always ready to help other people. It was the exercise of this trait of his character that had made him so tired this warm morning.

For about a week, he had been absent from home on various errands of benevolence. Among other things, he conferred a great benefit upon the people of a certain country by bringing to justice an old sorceress, who, for many years, had been worrying and tormenting the whole population. When Derido heard of this, he resolved to have her punished, and so he caught her napping, one day, and took her to a friend of his, who was a magician, and had her turned into a sewing-woman, and compelled, for the rest of her life, to make shirts at the rate of two loaves of bread apiece, and if there were frills to the bosoms, a penny-roll extra. It must be admitted that this was very hard on the old witch, but she was so extremely malicious and depraved that she deserved the worst she could get.

When the giant had got through with this business, he had gone to the assistance of the king of a small country, who had but few soldiers, and whose dominions were invaded by a powerful king, with a large

army. Derido arrived just as a battle was about to commence, and instantly saw that the little army had not a shadow of a chance.

So he went straight to the king of the small country, and asked to be made Head General of his forces. The king immediately consented, and put his army under command of the giant.

"But," said the king, "how will the enemy know you to be the Head General? I have no feathers or sashes or medals big enough for you."

"Never mind," said Derido; "when we get to work they will find out I'm General, without any sashes and feathers."

So, at the head of his little army, Derido marched right close down in front of the enemy. When the commanders of the large army saw that Derido was among their opponents, they began to change their minds about having a battle, and sent a flag of truce to him.

"Do you belong to this army?" asked the man who bore the flag.

"Oh! yes," said Derido, "I'm Head General."

The man then galloped back to his king, and reported. Directly he returned with his flag.

"His Majesty begs me to assure you that he has had

a very pleasant journey through part of your king's dominions, and is sorry he can't stay longer, but pressing affairs call him immediately home."

"Oh! he mustn't go until I see him," said Derido. "Ask him to come over."

So the king of the invaders thought he had better come, and Derido said to him:

"I'm sorry to see you are in such a hurry to return. You surely cannot have got all you wanted of our king."

"Oh! yes, yes," said the other; "we only wanted a little trip—just a little trip."

"You're entirely too modest," said the giant. "Now, I'm pretty sure I know what you came for. You heard that our people had a great quantity of corn in the public granaries that they could neither use nor sell. I believe that you came to buy that corn, but you don't like to say so."

"Now I come to think of it, I do want some corn," said the king: "I'll take all you've got to spare. Just send it over to my camp, and I'll have the money ready. Good-day:" and he turned to go, but just happening to think of something, he came back, and said to Derido: "Is this a permanent situation that you've got?"

"Yes," said the giant; "whenever there's war, I'm Head General of this army."

"Good-day," said the king; "I don't know when I shall be able to get around this way again. Remember me to your king;" and off he went.

Every man of the invading army went home with a great bag of corn on his back, and when the inhabitants of the small kingdom saw a cart-load of gold dumped down into the public vaults, they were so delighted that they had a grand celebration, and all the children had holiday; all the toy and candy shops were declared free, and the boys and girls went in and took just what they liked best, and the king paid for it all.

On his way home from this kingdom, the giant had tired himself still more, but this time it was for his own gratification. Coming along by the sea-shore, he found a great anchor. Thinking it might be of use some day, he picked it up and hung it to his belt. Then it struck him that it would be a good idea to go a-fishing, and, accordingly, he stopped at a fishing village and bought about two miles of stout rope. He then walked some distance further on, to where the sea was very deep, and where it was a great place for whales. Going out on the top of a high promontory, and having tied his anchor to the end of the rope, he stood and watched for a whale to come up and blow. He soon saw one, about a mile and a half off, and whirling the anchor around

his head, he let it fly, and it went clear out to the end of the rope and sunk into the sea, with the line right over the whale's back. The giant pulled in, ever so quick, hoping to hook his fish when he jerked the anchor up against him, but the old whale slipped from under the rope, and went swimming away, with as much of a smile on his face as it is possible for a whale to have. Poor Derido had to haul in his anchor, which was troublesome to do, for it continually caught on things at the bottom, and when he got it in at last, he determined that the next whale should not escape him so easily.

He then broke off one of the flukes of the anchor, and bent the other one out straight, so that it and the shank were like one long piece of iron. When he had sharpened the arrow-headed end of the fluke, he had a first-rate harpoon—that is, for a person of his size. So he stood again and watched for a whale, and when one rose, he sent his harpoon whizzing through the air, and aimed it so truly that it went deep into the whale's fat side and hooked him tight. But the giant had a very hard time hauling him in. The whale was a good big one, and he struggled, and jerked, and pulled back, nearly hard enough to move a church; but Derido was a match for him. He went to work like a good fellow, and hauled in his rope, hand over

hand, and there was nothing for the whale to do but to come too. When he got his fish into shallow water, Derido waded in, and, picking him up, slung him over his shoulder and carried him high and dry on shore, where he let him flop and roll until he got used to being out of the water. When the whale got thus far, he died.

It was afternoon by this time, and so the giant took his whale on his back, and having gathered up his fishing-cord and harpoon, he started for home. Derido lived in his mother's castle, and he thought that she would be very glad to see him bring home so much nice fish. But after he had walked about an hour or two, he began to think that he would not take his whale home.

"If I do," he said to himself, "I know just what will happen. There will be roast whale to-morrow, and cold whale the next day, and after that, whale-hash for a day or two more. No, I won't take it home; I'll give it to somebody who needs it more than we do."

He had not gone far before he saw a man standing on a high rock, with a stone in his hand, looking about him in every direction. The giant stopped and asked him what he was trying to do.

"Why," said the man, "perhaps a bird may fly by

after a while, and if it does, I shall throw this stone at it, and if I hit it we shall have it for supper."

"We," said the giant, "who are we?"

"Why, myself, and my wife, and our five children," said the man; "who should we be but us?"

"Well, do you pretend to say that one of those small birds which fly about here will be enough supper for seven people?" asked Derido, putting down the whale.

"No; it won't be anything like enough, but we often have to put up with as little. The children eat all they can pick from a bird, and then my wife and I suck the bones."

"Upon my word," said the giant, "I shouldn't think any of you would get very fat on that sort of living. It is too bad that you should have such miserable fare, and so I will give you this whale that I have just caught. You can have some of it right away for your suppers, and if you cut the rest up and dry it, it will last your whole family for a year or two."

"People don't eat whale," said the man.

"How do you know?" asked the giant. "Did you ever hear of any one who had tasted it and didn't like it? Did you ever try it yourself? I should think a person as badly off as you would be glad to try whale-meat, before you say it's not eatable."

"I don't want to try it," said the man, looking about to see if he could find a bird. "People would laugh if they saw me cutting up a whale for food. But I'll tell you what I will do; I'll take the skin for a carpet for our best room. We haven't got any carpet on it."

"Not if I know it," said the giant, throwing his fish back on his shoulder, "no whale for you to-day, my friend." And he marched off, provoked that he had stopped to talk to such a blockhead of a man.

It soon became dark, and as the sky was cloudy, and there was no moon, it was very dark indeed. The giant had great difficulty in keeping on his journey, for he could not see a step before him. Directly he walked into a river, and wet his legs badly, and as he floundered across, he felt very much inclined to throw the whale away, for he had trouble enough in getting along without having to carry that heavy fish. But he did hate to waste anything, and so he carried it on, wondering to what use he could put it. Directly a thought struck him.

"The old thing is full of oil," said he to himself, "and I have a great mind to light it."

No sooner said than done. He had just run against a tall young tree, so he drew his sword and cut it down, and trimming off the top, he ran the trunk into the whale's mouth, and down into its body, so as to

make a handle. Then he cut off the tail, and the oil came bubbling out. Taking from his pocket a flint and steel and some tinder, he lighted some dry leaves, made a blaze, and set fire to the tail-end of the whale. The oil blazed quite lively, as the giant held it up by the trunk of the tree, and soon it was burning so brightly that he could see just as well as he wanted to. Shouldering his great torch, he marched off gayly. The whale burnt fiercer and fiercer, the lower the flame got down, and soon the whole country around the giant, as he strode along, was bright as day. The cocks commenced to crow, the birds to sing, and the grasshoppers and beetles got up and began to look for their breakfasts. As to the owls and nighthawks, they all went to bed, and the giant walked on with the whale over his shoulder, blazing away like a young volcano.

When daylight appeared, the whale was nearly all burned up, and he threw it away, very glad that he had been able to make such a good use of it. As the sun rose, the clouds passed away, and everything was bright and lovely. So when the giant reached the palm-tree that we mentioned before, he sat down and ate a few bushels of crackers he had in his pocket, and then thought he would take a nap. This place was dry, and the sun was warm; so he put his head in the shade and went to sleep; and the shade had moved and his face

had been in the sunshine for about an hour, when a princess came riding by.

Her name was Falema, and she was very unhappy. She was unhappy because she was going to be married in a day or two. She was not grieving because she did not love the young king, Gantalor, to whom she was engaged, but because the wedding was to come off before she was ready. The young king was a very fine fellow, but he was nearly always at war. In a day or two he was to have a short peace, and he wanted to get married before he had to go to war again. So Falema's father had settled it that the wedding was to come off the day that Gantalor's peace should commence. Falema was not ready for this great affair. There had been such short notice, that only part of her dresses were made up, and it distressed her greatly to think that she would not make a proper appearance in her husband's palace, if she should be married so soon. So she was unhappy, and had gone out that morning on her pony, attended by her ladies and a few slaves, to see if the fresh air would do her good. When she suddenly came upon the giant lying under the tree, she was frightened, but some of her people told her it was Derido, and that he would hurt nobody. So then she began to pity him, lying there with his face all exposed to the sun.

"It's dreadful," said she. "He will get freckled."

So she took out her handkerchief, and all her ladies took out their handkerchiefs, and they spread them over such parts of the giant's face as they could reach; but they did not begin to cover it. Then they tried their sun-umbrellas, but they did not amount to very much, either.

"If he had his head over there, near the root of that tree," said one of the ladies, "he would be all right."

"Well, let's wake him up," said the Princess, "and make him move."

So they punched at him, and thumped at him, the Princess, ladies, slaves, and all, but they did not disturb him in the least.

One of the slaves proposed to stick him a little with their spears, but the Princess would not allow that.

"Well," said another of the ladies, "we can't move him, and we can't move the tree, so we had better go on and let him alone."

"I don't know about moving the tree," said the Princess. "Here, you slaves, just take your swords, and cut down that palm-tree, and be very careful it don't fall on the giant."

So the slaves took their swords, and cut down the tree, and, as they were very careful, it did not fall on the giant.

Then, by the Princess's orders, they cut about half of the trunk off, and the upper part, with the broad-spreading leaves above, looked very much like an enormous umbrella.

"Now stick it up somewhere, near him," said the Princess, "so that it will shade his head."

They tried it in several places, but nowhere would it shade his whole face; so one of the ladies suggested that they should stick the tree into his mouth, which was stretched open quite wide enough for the purpose.

This suggestion being approved of, the slaves climbed up and put it into his mouth, and it stood up nicely and shaded his whole face. Then the Princess and her retinue rode off.

After a little while, the giant began to dream that he was cutting a new tooth. It made him uneasy, and he soon awoke. When he saw the upper part of a palm-tree sticking out of his mouth, he was at first afraid that he had swallowed the roots, and the rest of it, but he soon found that it was not so. He took it out, and sat up; and then he saw, at a distance, the Princess and her party returning.

So he imagined that they had something to do with the matter, and he lay down quickly, and put the palm umbrella back in his mouth, and made believe to be asleep.

When the Princess came up, she said: "Well! if the poor giant isn't asleep yet. I am glad he is more comfortable than he was."

And then she was going to ride away, but the giant put out his hand, and caught her up in it, horse and all.

She was very much frightened at this, and screamed, and all her people ran away; but the giant sat up, and looked so good-humored, and spoke so kindly, that the Princess soon became quieted, and the people came back and stood near her.

Derido put the Princess, horse and all, on his knee, and she smoothed her hair down, and fixed her ribbons straight, and began to talk to her big acquaintance.

She told him how she had had the palm-tree stuck up in his mouth, and they both laughed very much, and the giant was much obliged. It must have been comical to hear them laughing, for there was about as much difference in their voices, as there is between a cherry-stone and a prize pumpkin. Then Falema, who loved dearly to talk, went on, and told the giant why she was unhappy.

"That's too bad," said Derido. "And he won't wait until your dresses are finished, eh? How many have you got done?"

"Only about forty," said the Princess, "and there never was anybody married out of our family with less than a hundred new dresses."

"And how long would it take to finish them all?" asked the giant.

"Oh! it would take three or four days more, for I've got all the seamstresses in the kingdom, and they work as hard as ever they can, and they can't do any more, unless they work at night, and you know I won't allow that."

"Certainly not," said Derido. "Poor things, it would kill them, sooner or later. I will tell you what I will do for a kind young lady like you. You say that the young King Gantalor is only anxious to have the wedding so soon because his peace is to commence in a day or two?"

"That's it," said Falema. "If this last war of his had continued a little longer, I should have been ready."

"Well now," said the giant, "this is what I will do: I will go to-morrow, and make war against him, and I'll fight him until your dresses are done."

"Oh, you dear, good giant!" cried Falema. "But you mustn't kill or wound him."

"I'll not hurt a hair of his head," said Derido. "But how shall I know when your dresses are done?"

"Oh! I will send you some of the pieces that are

left," replied the Princess, "and then you may be sure that they are done; for as long as dresses are making, the pieces are always wanted for covering cord and for little gores, and such things."

"Certainly," said the giant, "and to shrivel up for trimmings."

"Shrivel up!" said the Princess, laughing, "you mean flute."

"Perhaps I do," said Derido. "But I must go now, and you must not forget to send me the pieces when all is ready."

So the Princess was put down, and she galloped away home with the good news, and that day she treated all her seamstresses to wine and cake, and a linsey-woolsey shortgown apiece.

Early the next morning, the giant appeared before the palace of Gantalor, where his army was all drawn up, ready to be dismissed for a short furlough. The royal treasurer was there, with his money-bags, to pay them off, and the soldiers were just going to stack their spears in the courtyard.

"Halloo!" said the giant; "what's up now?"

"Oh! you see," said the young king, "we are about to have a short peace, and my men are going home for a while."

"BUT HOW SHALL I KNOW WHEN YOUR DRESSES ARE DONE?"

"That's bad," said Derido, "for I came here to make war on you."

"Is that so?" said Gantalor; and then, turning to his army, he shouted: "Put away those money-bags! 'Tention battalions! Shoulder spears! By the right flank, wheel! Forward march!" And springing on his horse, he put himself at the head of his army.

"It seems to me that you are in an awful hurry," said Derido. "This is no place to fight, but I know of a splendid battle-ground, and I will show you where it is."

So the giant led the way, and Gantalor and his whole army went after him, to the good place for a battle that he had spoken of. After marching a long time, Gantalor called out:

"Halloo there, Derido! I should think that by this time we had gone far enough."

"Oh! no," replied the giant, "we haven't got there yet. Don't be impatient. It's an excellent place that I am taking you to, and it's a great deal better to do things right, while you are about it."

"Oh! yes," said the king, who was very fair in all his dealings, "certainly, I want to have things all right, while we are about them."

So they marched on until they came to a beautiful

level plain, and the giant said that was the place, and Gantalor agreed that it was a very good place indeed for a battle. Then the giant chose his position, and the king chose his, and then it was night, and the giant said they would begin to go to work early in the morning. The king was all ready to fight right away, but the giant did not approve of night battles, and so they all encamped until morning.

Early the next morning the young king arose, and the first thing he saw was the giant hard at work carrying great rocks, and piling them up in a line on the place he had chosen.

"Halloo!" cried Gantalor, "what are you doing there?"

"Making a fort," said the giant.

"Oh bother!" cried the king; "we don't want a fort. It will take ever so long to build one."

"It's all very well for you folks to talk that way," said Derido. "There are thousands of you, and only one of me. What do you suppose I should do if you were to get around in my rear?"

"That's so," said the king. "I suppose you must have a fort. But hurry up with it."

The giant went to work, and spent the whole morning piling rocks; and Gantalor, supposing that his intended father-in-law might think it strange that he

was not on hand on the wedding-day, wrote and sent him a letter, explaining why the ceremony would have to be postponed for a little while. After dinner the young king went out to see how the giant was coming on, and he found that he was not half done.

"Halloo!" cried he; "how long are you going to keep me waiting here? I thought you'd be done by this time."

"It's very easy to talk," said the giant, "but if you really felt in such a hurry, as you say you do, you would send some of those lazy soldiers of yours to help me."

"That's so," said Gantalor. "Here, you lazy soldiers, every one of you take a spade and help this giant build his fort. We'll never have a battle if we go on this way."

Then all the soldiers took spades, and they went to work to help the giant, and by night the fort was done.

It was a fine, large, high fort, and the spaces between the rocks were all nicely filled in with earth and smoothed over. By the time it was done, night came on, and they all encamped and slept well till morning. Early the next day, the young king got up, and saw the giant walking around the outside of his fort.

"Why don't you get in, and let us begin?" cried Gantalor. "That's a good fort you've got now."

"Yes," said Derido. "When it gets a deep ditch around it, it will be as good a fort as I ever saw."

"Ditch!" cried the enraged young king. "I don't know what it is you will want next! I'm not going to wait here until you make a ditch."

"Why, of course I must have a ditch," cried the giant, loud enough to be heard a mile or two. "Didn't you say we were going to have this thing all right, while we were about it? Just answer me that, if you please! And I'd like to know what's to hinder your soldiers from walking right up to my fort, in the night while I'm asleep, and climbing over, if I haven't a ditch!"

"Well," said Gantalor, "I suppose you ought to have a ditch. Here, you lazy soldiers, take every one of you a spade, and dig the giant a ditch around his fort, and don't be any longer about it than you can help."

So they all went to work, and dug the ditch, and that took until afternoon; and then a canal had to be made, nearly a mile long, to bring water from the river to fill the ditch, and then it was night, and they all slept well until morning.

Very early indeed, the giant got up, and smoothed over a large patch of soft earth, right in the middle of

his fort, and taking a great sharp-pointed stick, he wrote on the ground, in huge letters:

"GONE FOR PROVISIONS—BACK SOON."

Then he stepped over the wall of his fort, ditch and all, and ran home as fast as he could go. When he reached his mother's castle, it was breakfast-time, and he told her his adventures, and she laughed heartily over them, and they had such a pleasant time at the table that they each drank two tubs of coffee, whereas they generally took one. During the morning the giant's mother fixed him up a great basket of provisions, containing seventeen barrels of flour, four of bran flour, nine hundred hams, forty bushels of crackers, one hundred pounds of cheese, a thousand boxes of sardines, one hundred dozen lemons, a hundred pounds of sugar, a thousand pounds of dried beef, ten firkins of butter, a thousand bottles of pickles, and ever so many other things that she thought he might want, if the siege held out for a few days.

These things were tolerably heavy, of course, and Derido did not make very good time going back. It was sunset before he saw his fort in the distance.

In the morning of that day, not long after the giant had left, the king had got up early, and arranged his troops for the battle. As the giant was not to be seen,

they thought, of course, that he was sheltering himself behind his fortifications. So, Gantalor, who was a splendid soldier, drew his men up in line, and put them into position, and marched them here, and marched them there, and took possession of certain positions to the right, and took possession of other positions to the left, and held some of his men in reserve, and put others in the advance, and fixed up tents for hospitals, and got his portable bridges to the front, and by dinner-time every thing was ready for the grand attack, even to the slight intrenchments necessary to protect certain portions of the army from the giant's missiles. After a hurried dinner, the grand charge was sounded, and the soldiers rushed forward, and they bridged the ditch, and crossed the bridges, and stormed the walls, and waved their flags, and shouted, "Victory!" and jumped down into the inside, and found written there:

"GONE FOR PROVISIONS—BACK SOON."

You would better believe that when King Gantalor saw this, he was angry. For a half hour or so, he was so angry that he did not know what to do with himself, but then he cooled down, and remembering that Derido would certainly keep his word, and come back, he drew off his men, and resolved to attack the giant

; soon as he returned, and nothing was to be allowed
) prevent.

When Derido got tolerably near the fort, he saw
ıat it had been attacked, and supposing that Gan-
ılor would be mad enough when he found it empty,
e thought he had better rest a little; and so he did,
nd did not reach his fort until after dark, when the
ing and all his forces had gone to bed.

Before daylight the next morning, Gantalor had
is men all in position, and when the giant awoke and
ood up, Gantalor shouted to him: "Look out there!
Ve're going to begin! No more fooling now! Bridges
) the front! Stormers, forward, march! Spearmen,
:ady aim, fire!"

And instantly the men with the portable bridges
ın down to the ditch, and the storming parties fol-
)wed them, and the spearmen sent their weapons
ying through the air. Then the men with bows aimed
ıeir arrows at the giant, and those with catapults sent
)cks whizzing round his head, and he felt like a boy
ı a hornet's nest.

He had hardly expected they would commence so
)on, and he did not know what to do. As for really
ghting them, he had determined not to do that, or
e could have drawn his great sword, and chopped
ıe whole army up fine, in about three-quarters of an

hour. The stones, and arrows, and spears came thicker and thicker. Numbers of soldiers had crossed the ditch, and were already on top of the walls, and they could take such good aim from their new positions, that several missiles had already struck Derido in the face. A spear hit him on the side of the nose.

"There!" he cried. "If that nasty thing had gone in my eye, it would have made me mad."

He had provided himself with no ammunition whatever, and now that the fighting was getting to be at such close quarters, he looked for something with which to defend himself. He was so big that it was of no use to try to get behind anything. As he looked around, he saw his pickle-jars, and, breaking a number of them, he commenced hurling handfuls of pickles at his assailants. When a pickle hit a man in the face, the man howled, I can tell you; and, for a while, Derido kept the enemy back with these sour missiles. But a thousand jars of pickles will not last a giant long, when he uses them in that way, and the supply was soon exhausted.

And now the soldiers were coming in on all sides. Gantalor was on the walls, shouting to his men and waving his sword above his head, and Derido was hit by something or other every moment, and as the men were nearer, the hits were harder. There was nothing

for him to throw, but great hard things, which might kill people; and so, making a very wry face, Derido ran to the rear-wall, made a skip right over it and the ditch, and evacuated the fort.

What a shout the soldiers then set up!

Gantalor waved his hat and his sword, and if he had had more hands, he would have waved his coat and his boots, and he shouted: "Victory! victory!"

And all the soldiers shouted, "Victory!" till they were hoarse. The excitement was so great, that every man in the army rushed pell-mell into the fort, even the reserve corps and those left in charge of the hospital-tents.

As for the giant, he sat down on the ground outside, and picked the arrows out of his clothes.

When the enthusiasm had somewhat subsided, Gantalor ordered the seventeen barrels of flour to be piled up, end on end, until they made a high column, and then he got on the top of them, and summoned the giant to deliver himself up.

"Not to-day, if you please," said Derido; "I've only changed my base. Now then," he cried, "just let me see any of you fellows come out of that fort. You're all my prisoners, every man of you!" And he jumped up, and drew his sword, and commenced rushing around the outside of the ditch, chopping his sword

into the ground, and whirling it over his head in such a terrible way, that Gantalor got down off the flour-barrels in a hurry, and the soldiers crouched down behind the walls, as close as they could get. Not one of them would have dared to climb over the walls while that terrible giant was slashing his great sword about in that way.

When Derido got tired of this exercise, he sat down near the fort and began throwing great stones across it, just grazing the tops of the walls. As all the stones went clear over, they hurt nobody, but if any one had been on top of the walls, it would have been bad for that person. The giant was a good shot with a stone or young rock, and every now and then he made one just scratch the top of the earthworks, causing the dirt and gravel to fly like hail-stones.

Gantalor and his army began to think that they had got themselves into a bad fix. It was impossible to get over those walls (there was no entrance-way) while the giant was hurling stone after stone in that style, and all their stores, and provisions, and spare arms were outside, in the camp.

The giant amused himself in this way for quite a long time, but at last, while turning round, and reaching back for a big stone, he saw a man on horseback riding toward him as fast as he could come. As soon

as the man reached him, he handed Derido a big bag, filled with the pieces that were left of the Princess's dresses.

The moment the giant saw the pieces in the bag, he sprang to his feet, jerked out of his pocket a great white handkerchief, as big as the mainsail of a ship, and sticking his sword into it, he waved it round his head, shouting at the top of his voice:

"I surrender! I surrender!"

Gantalor and his men stood up in amazement at the strange sight of the giant surrendering just when he had the best of them: but they were still more amazed when Derido stepped over the wall, right into their midst, and shouted to the king, while still frantically waving his white flag over his head:

"Go home, Gantalor, and marry your princess! Give her my love, and tell her to teach you the value of a peaceful life. If there are any battles to be fought, let me know, and I'll do your fighting for you. As for you, soldiers, you can have my provisions; I shan't need them. I'm going home. The war's over."

With these words, he jumped over the walls, and strode off home as fast as he could go, his white flag still fluttering over his shoulder.

Gantalor looked after him for a few minutes, and then he said:

"If there is a lunatic asylum in the country big enough, that giant ought to be put in it!"

Then he gave orders to pack up and march home. As he was watching the men break up their camp, he said:

"A war with the giant has one good thing about it. Look at these hospital-tents; they haven't been needed at all."

When the young king reached his palace, he left his men there, and, with a few followers, he went straight on to Falema's father's kingdom.

When he came near the royal residence, there, on the balcony, he saw the princess, dressed in a lovely gown of pink chenille; and behind her, in a row, all her seamstresses, in their nice new linsey-woolsey short-gowns, eating calvesfoot jelly with golden spoons, to refresh themselves after their hard labors.

The next day, the young King Gantalor and the Princess Falema were married, and she led him such a happy life, that he never cared to go to war again. And, strange to say, he found that when he did not want to fight anybody, nobody seemed to want to fight him. The officers of his army came to the wedding, and each of them the next day married one of the princess's seamstresses, and each couple had a house and garden given them, and they lived happily, and

got very fat. The common soldiers married anybody that would have them, just like other people, and they each had a house and garden given them, and lived as happily, and got just as fat as the officers.

As for the giant, he took the pieces of the princess's dresses home to his mother, who made him a patchwork quilt out of them, and he slept under it for a long time; but I think it must be entirely worn out now.

GRIM GRIFFIN

Grim Griffin was a giant bold,
Who lived beside the sea;
A terror to the country wide,
From Galway to Tralee.

The Farmers knew his heavy tread,
Which seemed to shake the land,
When coming from his castle tall,
That overlooked the strand.

At times he carried off their fruit,
At times their stacks of grain;
At times he took the fattest brute
That grazed upon the plain.

And out before his castle door,
  In heaps lay hoof and horn;
And piles of pods without the peas,
  And cobs without the corn.

But not alone to farmer's goods
  Were Griffin's acts confined.
At certain seasons of the year,
  To fish his taste inclined.

And when the hardy fishermen
  Came toiling near the strand,
The giant would disperse the crew
  And drag their net to land.

At last the men, of nothing sure,
  Forsook the coast for good,
And left the giant to procure
  His fish as best he could.

Then often with a mighty pole,
  And lengthy line to match,
He sat beside the foaming tide,
  His morning meal to catch.

At times he hooked a weever dark,
A salmon or an eel,
And next a grampus or a shark
Would try his rod and reel.

At length it chanced a hungry whale
Was swimming by one day,
The baited hook the monster took
And gently moved away.

"Ho, Ho!" the Giant laughed aloud,
I've got no common bite,
The line is long, the rod is strong,
I'll have a feast to-night.

"There's not a fish that works a fin,
In river, lake, or sea,
However strong or broad or long,
Can prove a match for me!"

Then rashly round his waist he wound
The surplus line with care.
Determined should his hands give out,
His weight would still be there.

Now as the giant and the whale
  Joined issue in the tide,
The screaming birds around them flew
  Describing circles wide.

But, weight and strain and boasting vain,
  Were all of no avail,
For off the rock he slid amain,
  Behind the rushing whale;

And Galway's coast was miles behind,
  The Isles of Arran past,
When still the giant, like the wind,
  Was moving seaward fast.

Then people hastened to the shore,
  To view the pleasing sight,
And clapped their hands till palms were sore,
  And shouted with delight.

"Ah, strong be line of silk or twine,
  That round the rogue is tied;
And strong be tail and fin of whale,
  That take him hence," they cried.

"Let fish with saw, and fish with sword,
Soon carve him up with care;
And dish him out upon their board,
In slices portioned fair;

"That shark, and gar, and sculpin lean,
The hermit-crab, and pike,
The lamprey, and the lobster green,
May all be served alike.

"And there, five hundred fathoms deep,
Below the rolling tide;
The King of Herrings order keep,
And at the feast preside."

The sun went down, and home returned
To roost on crag and tree,
The weary birds, that many miles,
Escorted Grim to sea.

But he no more returned to shore,
To make the farmers fly;
Or strayed along the rugged coast,
To catch his morning fry.

Yet, sailors steering o'er the main,
To lands of rice and tea,
Report, a thousand miles from land,
A wondrous sight they see.

Upon an island, bleak and bare,
They mark a giant form,
That flings around a baited hook,
In sunshine and in storm.

But whether truthful tales they tell,
As round the seas they go;
Or simply spin a sailor's yarn,
The world may never know.

This hint remains for young and old,
To treasure in the mind;
Let folks be e'er so strong and bold,
They may a stronger find.

Like Griffin, they may strike a fish
They cannot bring to land;
And find, too late, the line of Fate
Too well the strain may stand.

THE GIANT POT-EAR

Once, long ago in India, there lived a hero called Rama who had a most beautiful wife named Sita. It happened one day, when Rama was away on a hunting trip, that a giant host came across the strait from the island of Ceylon. The leader of the host was Ravan, the giant king of that country, and all his men were mighty warriors. Out of the east they came, brandishing their weapons and uttering fierce war cries. They fell on the people, who were utterly surprised, and carried from Rama's dwelling place his beautiful wife. For Ravan had heard of Sita's beauty and had gathered together his host of warriors to steal her.

When Rama returned from his hunt he found his home destroyed and his wife gone. And when he learned that King Ravan had stolen beautiful Sita his

heart sank. How could he hope to conquer that fierce warrior and his giants? At first his grief overcame him and he wished only for death. But at length he arose and followed the tracks of the giant host, asking the peasants along the way if they had seen the invaders and if Sita still lived.

But thoughts of her beauty and goodness made his courage return and he vowed a solemn vow to save her, somehow, promising himself:

"Though giants hem her round, yet soon
She shall be freed, and shall arise
As radiantly as the moon
From clouds that darken autumn skies."

But how could Rama for all his bravery conquer an army of giants? He was a most extraordinary man, and had the good will of all the animals. So he assembled the monkeys of the forests and asked their help. They gathered in swarms, in crowds; the trees and the ground were covered with them, all chattering together!

They listened to Rama's plea for help and pledged themselves to aid him. First they took small fishing boats and fastened them end on end in a very long string, until they extended across the channel to the island of Ceylon. Here dwelt the giants in a walled

citadel, to which Ravan their king had carried Sita.

The giants were so busy with their merrymaking over such an easy victory that they did not perceive these strange things happening at their harbor. Late one night the monkeys, led by Rama, the hero, and Angad, their king, crept silently one after the other across the pontoon bridge, until every one was safely landed in Ceylon without so much as one of the giants suspecting it.

The army of monkeys made their way noiselessly through the forest until they reached the city; and then they stormed the walls. Shrieks of terror were heard on all sides! The giants were so frightened that they hardly fought at all, but ran for their fortress. After some fighting the monkeys swarmed over the walls, burned some of the houses, and only retreated to the forests when the giant archers started shooting at them with their arrows.

Ravan was consumed with fear, and ordered his servants to go awaken his most powerful subject, Pot-ear.

Now Pot-ear was a most remarkable giant. He was a mighty warrior when aroused, but was only awake one day in every six months. So, you see, he could not be much good in a long war. When these monkeys led by Rama besieged the city, Pot-ear was lying in a cave

at some distance, very soundly asleep. In fact, he had only slept a short matter of three months or so. However, Ravan needed him, so the giants were instructed to awaken him, no matter how hard it was.

Pot-ear always demanded food upon awakening, so the giants were prepared. They took deer, buffalo, boars, goats and huge barrels of wine and marched to Pot-ear's cave. From afar they could hear the rumble of his snoring. It sounded very much like thunder.

When the giants entered the cave bearing the food they could scarcely stand up because his snoring was so strong. They finally managed to pile all the food up so it would be convenient when he did awaken. It made a mountain of things to eat, rising by his elbow. But still he slept.

Then the giants grasped their trumpets and blew and blew; but Pot-ear snored blissfully on. They became impatient and hammered his chest with fists and clubs, bars and hammers, and threw boulders as big as furnaces upon him but he slept as calmly as though nothing had happened. Next they filled a hundred waterpots with water and poured them into his ears, but he did not move. At last, in despair, they drove a hundred elephants upon Pot-ear's chest, and the elephants started dancing; and—wonder of wonders—Pot-ear stirred uneasily, yawned, opened his eyes and

demanded to be told what all the fuss was about.

He was in a very bad temper because his rest had been disturbed three months before it was time for him to awaken. Turning, he saw the food piled near him. So he ate and ate; fifteen boars, six buffalo, and no telling how many deer and goats, and washed this huge breakfast down with five barrels of wine.

Then he said, "Surely something terrible has happened, or I would not be awake. What is it?"

And giant Post-eye answered him, "Never have we feared any creature, Pot-ear; but Rama, a man, has led his mountainous apes across the strait, for grief at the loss of his wife, Sita. They have burned our city and threaten us with death, and Ravan, our King and thy brother, bids thee avenge this outrage."

Then Pot-ear arose with a mighty roar and strode to the city. The very earth shook under the tread of his huge feet. When he reached King Ravan he promised to put the monkey hosts to flight, and out to the battle he hastened. In his hand was a pike made of black iron, gold-bespangled, and many spots of blood from fallen foes were on it. To the wall Pot-ear hastened, where the monkeys were besieging the city.

When they saw him approaching, towering above the city, fear filled their hearts and they broke ranks

and scattered in every direction. Angad, their king, called them back, saying:

"Why would you flee
Like apes of mean or no degree?
Return and prove your valor!"

And they did return. They bombarded Pot-ear with great boulders, and struck him with trees which they had torn up by the roots. But Pot-ear only fought more fiercely, killing thousands and devouring them. He shrieked, "Where is Rama, Rama? I will fight only with him."

And Rama came rushing across the field of battle. Pot-ear raised his huge pike to hurl it at him. But a swift arrow cut the giant's right arm off at the shoulder. The club and arm fell with a mighty crash, and Pot-ear uttered a horrible scream. A second arrow sped from Rama's bow and Pot-ear's head was severed from his body and fell into the sea.

When Ravan, from his fortress, saw Pot-ear's head tumble from his shoulders he wept and wished to die, too. Nothing could now stop Rama and his monkey host. They surged forward in waves. The fortress fell before them and with it the giant army. Ravan was smitten by the same hand that killed Pot-ear.

Rama freed his wife from her prison-palace. When the battle was over, back across the bridge of boats they went, rejoicing, followed by all the monkeys. Back to feasts and happiness they traveled, knowing that the race of giants had been overcome.

POUCINET

Once upon a time there was a peasant who had three sons, Peter, Paul, and Jack. Peter was big, fat, red-faced, and dull-witted; Paul was spare, sallow, envious, and spiteful; Jack was as sharp as a steel-trap and as fair as a woman, but small—so small that he could have hidden away in his father's great boots, whence he was nicknamed Poucinet.

The peasant's sole worldly wealth was his family, and there was joy in the household when by chance they caught a glimpse there of the shadow of a penny. Black bread was dear, and it was hard to earn a living. As soon as the three children were old enough to begin to work, their father begged them from morning to night to leave the hut where they were born and go out into the world to seek their fortune.

"In other lands," said he, "bread is not always easily

earned, but there is some to be had for the getting; while here there is none at all, and the best thing that can happen to you is to die of starvation."

But, lo! a league from the peasant's cabin the king of the country had his palace—a magnificent building, all of wood, with twenty carved balconies and six glass windows. And, behold, suddenly, on a fine summer's night, just over against the windows there sprung from the ground a huge oak, with such thick branches and foliage that it darkened the whole palace. To cut down this giant was no easy task; not an ax could be found that its trunk did not blunt, and for every branch or root that was cut off two sprouted forth in its place. It was in vain that the king offered three bags of dollars to any one who would rid him of this troublesome neighbor. Tired of the struggle, he was forced to resign himself to the necessity of having the palace lighted at midday.

This was not all. In a country where brooks sprang from the very stones, there was no water in the royal household. In summer the inmates had to wash their hands in beer and to shave with honey. This was a shocking state of affairs, and the prince had promised lands, money, and the title of marquis to any one who should dig a well in the courtyard of the castle deep enough to furnish water all the year round. But no one

had been able to win the prize, for the palace was on high ground, with a solid bed of granite an inch below the surface.

Now the king had revolved these two ideas in his brain till he could think of nothing else. Petty prince as he was, he was just as self-willed as an Emperor of China. It is the monopoly of royalty. To attain his ends, he distributed throughout the length and breadth of his kingdom huge placards, stamped with the royal arms, offering to any one who should cut down the tree and dig the well nothing less than the hand of the princess his daughter and half his kingdom. The princess was as beautiful as the day; the half of a kingdom is never to be despised; and the reward was enough to tempt the most ambitious.

From Sweden and Norway, from Denmark and Russia, from Great Britain and the Continent, came a host of sturdy workmen, ax on shoulder and pick in hand. But it was in vain for them to cut and to chop, to dig and to hew; their labor was all lost. At every stroke the oak became harder and the granite more flinty, so that the boldest were forced at last to give up the task in despair.

One day, when the people in all the country round were talking of this matter that turned every one's brains, the three brothers asked themselves why, if their

father was willing, they should not go and try their fortune. It is true that they hardly hoped to succeed, and aspired neither to the princess nor half of the kingdom; but who knew whether they might not find a place and a good master at the court or elsewhere; and this was all they needed. Their father approved of the plan, and Peter, Paul, and Jack set out for the king's palace.

On the way, Poucinet skipped along the road, scampering hither and thither like a hound, noticing and studying all he saw, and ferreting into every nook and corner. Insects, weeds, and pebbles, nothing escaped his mouse-like eyes. Every moment he stopped his brothers to ask them the reason for this and that—why the bees burrowed into the flower-cups, why the swallows skimmed the surface of the streams, and why the butterflies flew in zigzag fashion. At all these questions Peter laughed, while Paul shrugged his shoulders, and told him to hold his tongue.

On the way they came to a great forest of firs that covered a mountain, upon the summit of which they heard the sound of an ax and the crash of falling branches.

"I wonder very much why any one is chopping wood on the top of the mountain," said Poucinet.

"I should wonder very much if you did not won-

der," answered Paul, harshly. "Everything is wonderful to the ignorant."

"Why, child, any one would think you had never heard of wood-choppers before," said Peter, pinching his little brother's cheek.

"No matter," returned Poucinet, "I am curious to see what is going on up there."

"Go, then," said Paul, "and tire yourself out; it will be a lesson to you, you conceited imp, who are always wanting to know more than your big brothers."

Poucinet troubled himself little about this remark. He clambered up the mountain, listening for the sound, and making his way in that direction. On reaching the top, what do you think he found there? An enchanted ax, which, all alone by itself, was cutting down a huge pine-tree.

"Good-morning, Madam Ax," said Poucinet. "Are you not tired of hacking away all alone at that old tree?"

"For long years I have been waiting for thee, my son," answered the ax.

"Well, here I am," replied Poucinet.

And, without being at all astonished, he took the ax, put it in his great leather bag, and skipped merrily down the mountain.

"Did you find anything up there that was so wonderful?" asked Paul scornfully.

"It was really an ax that we heard," answered the boy.

"I told you so," said Peter; "you have put yourself in a dripping sweat for nothing. You might better have stayed with us."

A little farther on the narrow path wound laboriously among masses of jagged rocks. In the distance, up the cliff, they heard a dull sound, like iron striking the stone.

"I wonder why any one is breaking stone up there," said Poucinet.

"Really," exclaimed Paul, "here is a chicken just out of his shell, who has never heard a woodpecker tapping a hollow tree."

"That's so," said Peter, laughing; "it is nothing but a woodpecker; stay with us, my boy."

"No matter," returned Poucinet; "I am curious to see what is going on up there."

And, behold, he set about clambering up the rocks on his hands and knees, while Peter and Paul laughed at him. On reaching the top of the precipice, what do you think he found there? An enchanted pickax, which, all alone, and by itself, was hollowing out the

ock as if it had been butter. At every stroke it pene-rated more than a foot.

"Good-morning, Madam Pickax," cried Poucinet. Are you not tired of digging away there all alone at hat old rock?"

"For long years I have been waiting for thee, my on," answered the pickax.

"Well, here I am," rejoined Poucinet.

And, without the least astonishment, he took the ickax, separated the ax from the handle, put the two ieces in his great leather bag, and skipped merrily own the rocks.

"What miracle did your lordship find up there?" sked Paul, in an insulting tone.

"It was a pickax that we heard," answered the boy, nd he went on his way without saying anything ore.

A little way farther on they came to a brook. The ater was cool and clear, and the travelers were hirsty. As they stooped to drink from the hollow of heir hands, Poucinet remarked,

"I wonder why there is so much water in such a shal-ow valley. I should like to know where this brook omes from."

"You conceited fool," cried Paul, "you want to pry

into everything. Don't you know that brooks spring from the ground?"

"No matter," said Poucinet; "I am curious to see where this water comes from."

And he followed up the course of the stream in spite of the cries and reproaches of his brothers. He went on and on, while the stream became narrower and narrower. And when he reached the end, what do you think he found? A walnut-shell, from which the water spouted and sparkled in the sun.

"Good-morning, Madam Spring," cried Poucinet. "Are you not tired of staying all alone here in a little corner, spouting water?"

"For long years I have been waiting for thee, my son," answered the walnut-shell.

"Well, here I am!" said Poucinet.

And, without the least astonishment, he took the walnut-shell, stopped it up with moss, so that the water could not flow, put it in his great leather bag, and skipped merrily down the mountain.

"Do you know now where the brook comes from?" cried Peter, as soon as he saw him.

"Yes, brother, from a little hole," answered Poucinet.

"This boy is too bright," said Paul; "he will never live to grow up."

"I have seen what I wished to see," whispered Pou-

net to himself, "and I know what I wished to know; am satisfied." And he rubbed his hands.

At last they reached the king's palace. The oak was ırger and more umbrageous than ever; there was no ⁄ell in the courtyard, and at the palace gate still hung ıe great placard promising the hand of the princess nd one half of the kingdom to any one, noble, urgher, or peasant, that should accomplish the two ısks desired by his majesty. But, as the king was tired f so many useless attempts, which had served no pur- ›ose but to drive him to despair, a small placard had een hung under the the large one, and on this small lacard was written, in red letters:

"Know all men by these presents, that, in his in- xhaustible goodness, his majesty the king has deigned › command that any one who does not succeed in utting down the oak or digging the well shall have ıis ears cut off on the spot, to teach him to know him- elf, which is the first lesson of wisdom."

And, in order that every one might profit by this ›rudent counsel, thirty bloody ears were nailed around his placard, belonging to those who had been lacking n modesty.

On reading the placard, Peter burst out laughing, urned up his mustaches, looked at his arms, with their ;reat muscles, like whip-cords, and swinging his ax

twice around his head, with one blow he cut off one of the largest branches of the accursed tree. But, no sooner had it fallen than two thicker and stronger boughs sprouted forth in its place; whereupon the king's guards seized the unlucky wood-chopper, and cut off his ears on the spot.

"You awkward fellow!" exclaimed Paul; and, taking his ax, he walked slowly round the tree, and, seeing a root springing from the ground, he chopped it off at one blow. At the same instant two enormous roots sprang up in its place, from each of which sprouted forth a vigorous branch, full of leaves.

"Seize this wretch!" cried the king, frenzied with rage, "and, since he did not profit by his brother's example, shave off his ears close to his head."

No sooner said than done. But the double family misfortune did not terrify Poucinet, who resolutely advanced to try his luck.

"Drive away that dwarf!" exclaimed the king; "and if he refuses to go, cut off his ears directly; it will teach him a lesson, and save us from witnessing his folly."

"I beg your pardon, your majesty, a king's word is sacred," said Poucinet. "I have the right to try; it will be time enough to cut off my ears when I fail."

"Go on, then," returned the king, sighing; "but take

re that I do not cut off your nose into the bargain."
Poucinet drew the enchanted ax from the bottom
his great leather bag. It was almost as tall as him-
lf, and he had great difficulty in setting it upright,
ıe handle on the ground. "Cut! cut!" he cried.
And, behold, the ax cut, chopped, and split, hew-
g in all directions, right and left, up and down,
unk, branches, and roots; in a quarter of an hour
ıe tree was in pieces, and there was so much wood that
ıe whole palace was warmed with it for more than
year.
When the tree was hewn down and chopped up,
ɔucinet approached the king, who was seated with
ıe princess by his side, and bowed gracefully to them
ɔth.
"Is your majesty satisfied with your faithful serv-
ıt?" asked he.
"Yes," said the king, "but I must have my well, or
ɔok out for your ears!"
"If your majesty will kindly show me where you
ish it placed, I will endeavor once more to please my
ɔvereign," answered Poucinet.
They repaired to the great courtyard of the palace.
he king took a raised seat; the princess placed her-
lf a little below her father, and began to look with
ɔme anxiety on the diminutive husband sent her by

Heaven. She had not dreamed of a spouse of this size. Without troubling himself at all about it, Poucinet took from his great leather bag the enchanted pickax, coolly fitted the ax to the handle, and, placing it on the ground at the designated spot, cried,

"Dig! dig!"

And, behold, the pickax splintered the granite, and in less than a quarter of an hour dug a well more than a hundred feet deep.

"Does your majesty think this cistern large enough?" asked Poucinet, with a bow.

"Yes, indeed," said the king; "but there is no water."

"Let your majesty grant me a minute," returned Poucinet, "and your just impatience shall be satisfied."

Saying this, he took from his great leather bag the walnut-shell, wrapped in moss, and placed it in a large basin, which, in default of water, had been filled with flowers. When the walnut-shell was firmly imbedded in the earth, he cried,

"Spout! spout!"

And, behold, the water spouted forth among the flowers, with a gentle murmur, forming a fountain that filled the whole courtyard with its coolness, and fell again in a cascade in such abundance, that in a quarter of an hour the well was full, and it was neces-

ry to hasten to dig a channel to carry off this menac-
ıg wealth of water.

"Sire," said Poucinet, bending one knee to the
round before the royal seat, "does your majesty think
ıat I have fulfilled your conditions?"

"Yes, Marquis de Poucinette," replied the king. "I
m ready to cede you half my kingdom, or, rather,
) pay you the value thereof, by means of a tax which
ıy faithful subjects will be too happy to raise; but to
ive you the princess and to take you for my son-in-
ıw is another affair, which does not depend on me
lone."

"What must I do?" asked Poucinet, haughtily, rest-
ıg his hand on his hip, and gazing at the princess.

"You shall know to-morrow," said the king.
Meanwhile, you are our guest, and the best chamber
ı the palace shall be made ready for you."

The king having gone, Poucinet hastened to find
is brothers, who, with their cropped ears, looked like
at-terriers.

"Well, brothers," said he, "was I wrong in keeping
ıy eyes open, and seeking out the reason of things?"

"You have been lucky," answered Paul, coldly.
Fortune is blind and chooses blindly."

"You have done well, my boy," cried Peter. "With

or without ears, I rejoice in your good-fortune, and wish our father were here to see it."

Poucinet carried his two brothers away with him, and, being in favor, the chamberlain found a post in the palace the same day for the two cropped varlets.

On retiring to his apartments, the king could not sleep. A son-in-law like Poucinet was not to his liking. His majesty studied how to avoid keeping his word without seeming to break it. For honest men, this task is difficult. Between his honor and his interest a knave never hesitates, but it is for this very reason that he is a knave.

In his anxiety, the king summoned Peter and Paul. The two brothers alone could tell him the birth, character, and manners of Poucinet. Peter praised his young brother, which delighted his majesty but little; Paul put him more at his ease by proving to him that Poucinet was nothing but an adventurer, and that it would be absurd for a great prince to feel himself pledged to a low-born wretch.

"The lad is so conceited," said the spiteful Paul, "that he thinks himself able to face a giant. In this district there lives an ogre who is the terror of the neighborhood, and who carries off the sheep and cattle for ten leagues around. Now Poucinet has said again

and again that if he liked he could make this giant his servant."

"We shall see if he will," exclaimed the king; and he dismissed the brothers and slept tranquilly.

The next morning, in the presence of the whole court, the king sent for Poucinet. He came, looking as fair as a lily, as fresh as a rose, and as smiling as the morning.

"My son-in-law," said the king, dwelling upon the words, "a brave man like you cannot marry a princess without giving her a household worthy of her. There is in this forest, an ogre who, it is said, is twenty feet high, and who breakfasts every day on an ox. With a laced coat, a cocked hat, gold epaulets, and a halberd fifteen feet long, he would make a porter worthy of a king. My daughter begs you to make her this little present, after which she will see about giving you her hand."

"It is not easy," said Poucinet, "but to please her highness I will try."

He went to the kitchen, put in his great leathern bag the enchanted ax, a loaf of bread, a piece of cheese, and a knife, then, throwing it over his shoulder, set out for the forest. Peter wept, but Paul smiled, thinking that, once gone, he would never be heard from again.

On entering the wood, Poucinet looked to the right and to the left, but the tall grass prevented him from seeing. Upon this, he began to sing, at the top of his voice, "Ogre! ogre! where are you, ogre? Show yourself! I must have your body or your life! Here I am!"

"And here I am!" cried the giant, with a frightful roar; "wait for me, and I will make but one mouthful of you."

"Don't be in a hurry, my friend," exclaimed Poucinet, in a shrill, piping voice, "I have an hour at your disposal."

The giant turned his head on all sides, astonished to see no one, then, casting down his eyes, he spied a lad, seated on the trunk of a fallen tree, holding a great leather bag between his knees.

"Was it you that broke up my nap, you rascal?" cried the giant, rolling his great flaming eyeballs.

"Yes, my good fellow," said Poucinet; "I have come to take you into my service."

"Ah!" said the giant, who was as dull as he was big, "that is a good joke. I am going to toss you into the crow's nest that I spy up yonder; that will teach you to prowl about my forest."

"Your forest!" returned Poucinet, "it is more mine than yours; if you say another word, I will cut it down in a quarter of an hour."

"Ah!" said the giant, "I should like to see you do hat, my little fellow."

Poucinet had placed the ax on the ground. "Cut! cut!" he cried, and, behold, the ax cut, chopped, split, and hewed to the right and left, and up and down, while the branches rained on the ogre like hail in a storm.

"Enough! enough!" cried the giant, who began to be alarmed; "do not destroy my forest. Who are you?"

"I am the famous sorcerer, Poucinet, and I have only to speak a word for my ax to chop off your head. You don't know yet whom you have to deal with. Stay where you are."

The giant stood still, greatly puzzled at what he had seen. Poucinet, who was hungry, opened his great leather bag, and took out his bread and cheese.

"What is that white thing?" asked the giant, who had never seen any cheese.

"It is a stone," said Poucinet, beginning to munch it greedily.

"Do you eat stones?" asked the giant.

"Yes, they are my usual diet; that is the reason why I do not grow like you, who eat beef; and that too is why, small as I am, I am ten times stronger than you. Show me the way to your house."

The giant was conquered. He led the way for Pou-

cinet, like a huge dog, and brought him to an immense building.

"Listen!" said Poucinet to the giant; "one of us must be the master and the other the servant. Let us make a bargain. If I cannot do what you can, I will be your slave; if you cannot do what I can, you shall be mine."

"Agreed!" said the giant; "I should like to have a little fellow like you to wait on me. It tires me to think, and you have wit enough for both of us. To begin with, here are my two buckets; go bring me the water for dinner."

Poucinet raised his head and looked at the buckets. They were two immense tuns, each ten feet high and six feet in diameter. It would have been easier to drown in them than to stir them.

"Ah!" said the giant, opening his huge mouth, "you are already nonplussed, my son. Do what I do, and go draw the water."

"What is the use of that?" asked Poucinet; "I will go and fetch the spring, and turn that into the dinner-pot; it will be much easier."

"No, no!" cried the giant; "you have already spoiled my forest; do not meddle with my spring—to-morrow I shall be thirsty. Make a fire and I will bring the water."

Having hung the dinner-pot over the fire, the giant threw in it a whole ox, cut in pieces, with fifty cabbages and a cartload of carrots. He skimmed it with a frying-pan, and tasted it again and again.

"Come to the table," said he, at length, "and now let me see you do what I do. For my part, I feel hungry enough to eat this whole ox and you into the bargain. You will answer for my dessert."

"Very well," said Poucinet. But before sitting down he slipped under his jacket his great leather bag, so that it fell from his throat to the ground.

The giant ate and ate, and Poucinet was not behind him, only, instead of putting the meat, cabbages, and carrots into his mouth, he slipped them into the bag.

"Oh!" cried the giant, "I can eat no more; I must undo a button of my waistcoat."

"Don't stop yet, you lazy fellow," said Poucinet, shoving half a cabbage under his chin.

"Ah!" cried the giant, "I must undo another button. What an ostrich's stomach you have! Any one could see that you are in the habit of eating stones."

"Go on!" said Poucinet, slipping a huge piece of beef out of sight.

"Ugh!" exclaimed the giant, "I have undone my third button—I feel stuffed. And how is it with you, sorcerer?"

"Bah!" said Poucinet, "nothing is easier than to give one's self a little room."

He took his knife and slit his jacket and bag the whole length of the stomach. "It is your turn," said he to the giant, "do what I do!"

"No, I thank you," answered the giant. "I cannot digest steel; I would rather be your servant.

No sooner said than done. The giant kissed his little master's hand in token of submission; then, lifting him on one shoulder and a large bag of gold on the other, he set out for the palace.

There was a holiday at the palace, and no one was thinking any more of Poucinet than if the giant had eaten him a week before, when suddenly there was heard a terrible uproar, which shook the building to its foundation. It was the giant, who, finding the great gate too small for him, had knocked it down with one blow of his foot. Every one ran to the window, the king with the rest, and saw Poucinet tranquilly seated on the shoulder of his terrible servant, on a level with the second-story balcony, where the court was assembled. He stepped down among them, and, bending his knee before his betrothed, said, "Princess, you wished for a slave; here are two of them."

This gallant speech, which was inserted the next day in the court journal, embarrassed the king not a little

at the moment when it was spoken. Not knowing what to answer, he drew the princess aside in the embrasure of a window and said, "My daughter, I have no excuse for refusing your hand to this daring youth. Sacrifice yourself, for state reasons; princesses do not marry for their inclination alone."

"I beg your pardon," returned she, with a courtesy, "princess or not, every woman wishes to marry to suit her taste. Leave me to defend my rights in my own way.

"Poucinet," she added, aloud, "you are brave and successful, but that is not sufficient to please the ladies."

"I know it," answered Poucinet; "it is necessary besides to do their will and bend to their caprices."

"You are a bright fellow," said the princess. "Since you are so good at guessing, I propose to you a last ordeal, which should not terrify you, since you will have me for your adversary. Let us try which is the cleverer, you or I. My hand shall be the price of victory."

Poucinet made a low bow. The whole court descended to the throne-room, where, to the general consternation, they found the giant seated on the floor. The ceiling being only fifteen feet high, the poor giant could not stand upright. At a sign from his young master, he crept to his side, proud and happy

to obey him. It was strength in the service of intellect.

"We will begin with an extravaganza," said the princess. "It is said that women do not stick at untruths; let us see which can tell the greatest falsehood. The one who first cries, 'That is too much!' will have lost."

"I am at your highness's orders, to lie in jest, or to speak the truth in earnest," answered Poucinet.

"I am sure," said the princess, "that your farm is not so large as ours. When two shepherds blow their horns at each end of the land, neither can hear the other."

"That is nothing," said Poucinet. "My father's estate is so vast that a heifer that is two months old when she enters the gate on one side is a full-grown milch cow when she leaves it on the other."

"That does not astonish me," said the princess. "But you have not such a huge bull as ours. Two men, seated on its horns, cannot touch each other with a twenty-foot pole."

"That is nothing," said Poucinet. "The head of my father's bull is so large that a servant perched on one horn cannot see the man sitting on the other."

"Neither does that surprise me," said the princess. "But you have not so much milk as we, for we fill daily twenty tuns each a hundred feet in height, and

pile up a mountain of cheeses every week as high as the great pyramid of Egypt."

"What of that!" said Poucinet. "In my father's dairy they make such mammoth cheeses that our mare one day having fallen into the mold, we did not find her until after a week's search. The poor animal had broken her back, and to use her I was forced to replace her spine by a large fir-tree, which worked admirably. But one fine morning the fir put forth a branch in the air, which grew so tall that, on climbing it, I reached the sky. There I saw a lady dressed in white, spinning thread from the foam of the sea; I caught hold of it, when, crack! it snapped, and I fell into a mouse-hole. There, whom should I find but your father and my mother, each with a distaff; and your father was so awkward that my mother boxed his ears till his mustaches shook."

"That is too much!" cried the princess, furious; "my father would never have submitted to such an indignity."

"She said, 'That is too much,'" cried the giant. "Master, the princess is ours."

"Not yet," said the princess, blushing, "Poucinet, I have three riddles to set you; guess them, and nothing will be left me to do but to obey my father. Tell me what it is that is always falling and is never broken?"

"Oh!" said Poucinet, "my mother told me that long ago; it is a waterfall."

"That is so," said the giant; "who would have guessed it?"

"Tell me," said the princess, in a more tremulous voice, "what it is that travels the same road every day, yet never retraces its steps?"

"Oh!" answered Poucinet, "my mother taught me that long ago; it is the sun."

"That is right," said the princess, pale with anger. "There remains a last question: what is it that you think and I do not? what is it that I think and that you do not? what is it that we both think? and what is it that neither of us thinks?"

Poucinet cast down his head and reflected; he was embarrassed.

"Master," said the giant, "if the question is too hard, don't bother your brains about it. Make a sign, and I will carry off the princess and settle the matter."

"Be silent, slave," answered Poucinet. "Strength can do little, my poor fellow, as you must know. Let me try some other means."

"Madam," said he, after a profound silence, "I scarcely dare guess your riddle, in which, nevertheless, I discern my happiness. I venture to think that your words would not puzzle me, while you justly thought

the contrary. You are good enough to think that I am not unworthy to please you, while I have not the temerity to think so. Lastly, what we both think," added he, smiling, "is that there are greater fools than we in the world; and what neither of us think is that the king, your august father, and this poor giant have as much—"

"Silence!" said the princess. "Here is my hand."

"What is it that you think about me?" asked the king. "I should be glad to know."

"My good father," said the princess, throwing herself on his neck, "we think that you are the wisest of kings and the best of men."

"Right!" returned the king. "I know it. Meanwhile, I must do something for my good people. Poucinet, I make you a duke."

"Long live my master, Duke Poucinet!" cried the giant, in such a voice that it was thought a thunderbolt had fallen upon the palace. Luckily, the only harm done was a general panic and a score of broken window-panes.

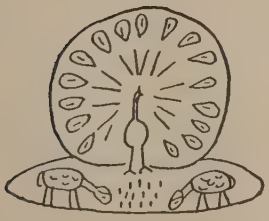
To describe the marriage of the princess and Poucinet would be a useless task. All weddings are alike; the only difference is in the day after. Nevertheless, it would be inexcusable on the part of a faithful historian not to tell how much interest the giant's presence added

to the magnificent festival. For example, on coming out of the church, in the excess of his joy the faithful giant could think of nothing better to do than to pick up the bridal carriage and put it on his head, and thus bring back the pair in triumph to the palace. This is one of the incidents that it is well to note, as its like is not seen every day.

In the evening there was a scene of festivity. Feasting, speech-making, epithalamiums, colored glass, fireworks, flowers, and bouquets—nothing was lacking; there was universal rejoicing. In the palace, every one was laughing, singing, eating, drinking, or talking. One man alone, lurking in a corner, solaced himself in a way different from the rest: this was Paul; he was glad his ears had been cut off, since he was thus made deaf and unable to hear the praises lavished on his brother; and wished that he were also blind, and that he might not see the happiness of the spouses. Unable to bear his thoughts, he at last fled to the woods, where he was devoured by the bears. I wish that all spiteful people might share his fate.

Poucinet was so small that it seemed hard at first for him to command respect; but his affability and gentleness soon won the love of his wife and the affection of all his people. After the death of his father-in-law he filled the throne for fifty-two years, without

any one for a single day desiring a revolution. Incredible as this fact may seem, it is attested by the official chronicle of his reign. He was so shrewd, says the history, that he always divined what would serve and please his subjects, and so good that the pleasure of others was his chief joy. He lived only for the good of those about him.



THE GIANT OF THE BLACK MOUNTAINS

ONCE upon a time there was a hunter and he had one son. While this son was still a little boy the hunter said to his wife, "My dear, our child will no doubt grow up to be a hunter just as I am, and if I should not be alive when that time comes I wish you would take care to tell him that he must not go to the Black Mountains to hunt; for evil befalls whoever goes thither."

Soon afterward the hunter died, and in time his son grew up and became a hunter as his father had been before him. Then his mother said, "Son, your father commanded me that I should warn you not to go to the Black Mountains to hunt."

But the son saw no good reason why he should not hunt there as well as elsewhere, and one day he took his bow and arrows, mounted his horse and rode to

the Black Mountains. At length he was among the lofty, forest-clad ranges, and he could not perceive but that they were perfectly peaceful and free from danger. "What could my father have meant by his warning?" he said to himself, and he kept riding on until suddenly a huge giant appeared before him.

"How now!" shouted the giant, "have you never heard of me that you dare to come and hunt on my ground?" and he picked up three great rocks and hurled them in quick succession at the intruder; but the young man contrived to dodge them, and fitting an arrow to his bow he shot the giant and killed him.

"I understand my father's warning now," said the young man; "but as this monster is no longer to be feared I will seek out his dwelling and see what treasure it contains."

So he went farther into the mountains and presently came to a magnificent castle. When he drew near to the entrance a beautiful maiden appeared at a window and he addressed her and asked to whom the castle belonged.

"Its owner is a great giant who will soon come and tear you in pieces," she replied. "How dare you venture among these terrible mountains?"

"The giant is dead," said the young man. "I have killed him."

"Ah, then!" cried she, "I am free. I have been his prisoner for many years, and you are my deliverer. Wait where you are and I will come down and unlock the castle gates and let you in."

She soon had the gates open and bade the young man welcome, and after he had led his horse to the stables the beautiful maiden conducted the young man into the palace. Then she told him she was the daughter of a prince, and that the giant had stolen her and that she had almost despaired of help ever reaching her. They talked together for a long time, and they liked each other so well that before they got through talking the young man asked the princess to be his wife.

"I am willing," said she, "and we can live here in the giant's castle."

"Yes," said he, "and I can go out hunting every day among the mountains."

But there was an old witch woman who had a hut in a wild glen not far from the castle, and when she knew that the giant was dead she went secretly to the body and administered some magic medicine that brought the giant to life. "Giant," said she, when she had restored him, "the young man who slew you is now in your castle. Go home and punish him as he deserves."

"No," said the giant, "I want nothing more to do with him. He is too clever with his bow and arrows to suit me, and I shall keep as far away from him as I can."

"Well, then," said the witch, "the task of disposing of him falls to me; for I do not intend to have him staying here in the mountains, if there is any way to prevent it."

"The quicker you get rid of him the better," said the giant. "Send him away on some errand from which he can never come back."

"That is just what I will do," responded the witch, "and I promise you in three days' time he will be gone to return no more."

Then the witch went to the palace and asked to be hired as a servant, and work was given her in the kitchen. It did not take her long to discover how fond the young man was of the princess, and on her third day at the palace she managed to put something into the food the princess ate that made her sick. No sooner was this accomplished than the witch said to the young man, "I fear your princess will die."

"Oh, no," cried he, "she must not die. We must make her well again."

"But there is only one thing can cure her," said the witch, "and that is the Melon of Life."

"Then I will get the Melon of Life," said he, "and I will start for it at once."

So he traveled all day long and in the evening he came to the house of an old man, who gave him lodging for the night. He told the old man the errand he was on, and the old man said, "Son, you are deceived. The expedition is a fatal one. Do not go."

But the young man would not be persuaded to turn back. "Well," said the old man, "if you must have your way I will give you three things to take with you. Here is a little jug of water, and here is a comb, and here is a knife. The Melon of Life is guarded by fifty giants, and if they pursue you throw these things behind you one at a time as there is need."

The young man took the jug and the comb and the knife and went his way, and at last he came to the garden of the fifty giants. He succeeded in getting into it without being seen, and there he found the Melon of Life. This he picked, and he wasted not a moment in starting on his return journey, but in getting through the garden hedge he cracked some dry twigs, and that alarmed the giants.

They looked around the garden to learn what had caused the noise, and soon perceived that the Melon of Life was gone. Then they set off in pursuit of the young man. When he saw that they were getting near

AT LAST HE CAME TO THE GARDEN OF THE FIFTY GIANTS.

him he threw the jug behind him. The water in it flowed out and covered the land he had just passed over with a great lake.

While the giants were going around this lake he gained quite a distance on them. But presently he saw them coming again. Then he threw the comb behind him and there sprang up a thick jungle through which the giants had great difficulty in forcing their way.

Thus he gained again on his pursuers. But they at length came out of the jungle and were on his trail once more. As soon as he saw them he threw the knife behind him, and the land in his rear was covered with thorn bushes, and the thorns were like sharp knives.

This time the young man got entirely away from the fifty giants and returned to the Black Mountains. However, during his absence, the giant whom the witch had restored to life had taken possession of the castle, and the princess had recovered from her sickness and was locked up in a dungeon.

When the young man approached the castle the giant chanced to be standing at the gates and saw him while he was still at a distance. The giant was very much startled, for he never expected that the young man would come back, and as he did not care to meet him he ran off at once to the forest.

The young man at sight of the giant knew that

things had gone wrong while he was away, and he made all haste into the castle, and the first thing he did was to release the princess. She was now quite well and did not need the Melon of Life and he locked it up in a closet.

They did not suspect the treachery of the witch woman and she continued to work in the kitchen. Every night she went to see the giant in the forest, and they plotted how to get rid of the young man once more. "I can never go back to my castle while he is alive," said the giant, "but I know an easy way to dispose of him."

"What is it?" asked the witch.

"If you can pull three hairs from his head he will die," replied the giant.

"Very well," said the witch, "I will pluck the three hairs, though it may be some time before I find a good opportunity."

So she watched and watched until one day the young man fell asleep on a couch in the great hall of the castle. Then the witch stole softly up to the couch, and selecting three hairs suddenly pulled them out. Immediately the young man's sleep became death, and the witch hurried off to tell the giant of what she had accomplished.

While she was gone the princess came in and found

the young man dead, and she cried and was very sad. But at last she thought of the Melon of Life locked in the closet and ran and brought it and held it before the young man's nostrils. No sooner did she do that than the young man sneezed seven times and sat up saying, "Oh, what a sound sleep I have had!"

"Sleep!" exclaimed the princess, "it was a sleep out of which you would never have awakened had it not been for the Melon of Life."

Then she told him of how she had found him perfectly lifeless. "There is some villainy in this," said he, "and we had better be on the watch."

So he got his bow and arrows, and he and the princess went up on a tower to look around and see if any danger threatened. They had not been long there when they perceived the giant and the witch coming from the forest. Then the young man let fly an arrow and it hit the witch and that was the end of her. The giant did not wait for the young man to shoot another arrow. He hastened away as fast as he could go and was never seen in the Black Mountains again, and the young man and the princess lived very happily in the castle ever after.

THE THREE GOLDEN APPLES

Did you ever hear of the golden apples, that grew in the garden of the Hesperides! Ah, those were such apples as would bring a great price, by the bushel, if any of them could be found growing in the orchards of nowadays! But there is not, I suppose, a graft of that wonderful fruit on a single tree in the wide world. Not so much as a seed of those apples exists any longer.

And, even in the old, old, half-forgotten times, before the garden of the Hesperides was overrun with weeds, a great many people doubted whether there could be real trees that bore apples of solid gold upon their branches. All had heard of them, but nobody remembered to have seen any. Children, nevertheless, used to listen, open-mouthed, to stories of the golden apple-tree, and resolved to discover it, when they should be big enough. Adventurous young men, who

desired to do a braver thing than any of their fellows, set out in quest of this fruit. Many of them returned no more; none of them brought back the apples. No wonder that they found it impossible to gather them! It is said that there was a dragon beneath the tree, with a hundred terrible heads, fifty of which were always on the watch, while the other fifty slept.

In my opinion it was hardly worth running so much risk for the sake of a solid golden apple. Had the apples been sweet, mellow, and juicy, indeed that would be another matter. There might then have been some sense in trying to get at them, in spite of the hundred-headed dragon.

But, as I have already told you, it was quite a common thing with young persons, when tired of too much peace and rest, to go in search of the garden of the Hesperides. And once the adventure was undertaken by a hero who had enjoyed very little peace or rest since he came into the world. At the time of which I am going to speak, he was wandering through the pleasant land of Italy, with a mighty club in his hand, and a bow and quiver slung across his shoulders. He was wrapt in the skin of the biggest and fiercest lion that had ever been seen, and which he himself had killed; and though, on the whole, he was kind, and generous, and noble, there was a good deal of the

lion's fierceness in his heart. As he went on his way, he continually inquired whether that were the right road to the famous garden. But none of the country people knew anything about the matter, and many looked as if they would have laughed at the question, if the stranger had not carried so very big a club.

So he journeyed on and on, still making the same inquiry, until, at last, he came to the brink of a river where some beautiful young women sat twining wreaths of flowers.

"Can you tell me, pretty maidens," asked the stranger, "whether this is the right way to the garden of the Hesperides?"

The young women had been having a fine time together, weaving the flowers into wreaths, and crowning one another's heads. And there seemed to be a kind of magic in the touch of their fingers, that made the flowers more fresh and dewy, and of brighter hues, and sweeter fragrance, while they played with them, than even when they had been growing on their native stems. But, on hearing the stranger's question, they dropped all their flowers on the grass, and gazed at him in astonishment.

"The garden of the Hesperides!" cried one. "We thought mortals had been weary of seeking it, after so

many disappointments. And pray, adventurous traveler, what do you want there?"

"A certain king, who is my cousin," replied he, "has ordered me to get him three of the golden apples."

"Most of the young men who go in quest of these apples," observed another of the damsels, "desire to obtain them for themselves, or to present them to some fair maiden whom they love. Do you, then, love this king, your cousin, so very much?"

"Perhaps not," replied the stranger, sighing. "He has often been severe and cruel to me. But it is my destiny to obey him."

"And do you know," asked the damsel who had first spoken, "that a terrible dragon, with a hundred heads, keeps watch under the golden apple-tree?"

"I know it well," answered the stranger, calmly. "But, from my cradle upwards, it has been my business, and almost my pastime, to deal with serpents and dragons."

The young women looked to his massive club, and at the shaggy lion's skin which he wore, and likewise at his heroic limbs and figure; and they whispered to each other that the stranger appeared to be one who might reasonably expect to perform deeds far beyond the might of other men. But, then, the dragon with a

hundred heads! What mortal, even if he possessed a hundred lives, could hope to escape the fangs of such a monster? So kind-hearted were the maidens, that they could not bear to see this brave and handsome traveler attempt what was so very dangerous, and devote himself, most probably, to become a meal for the dragon's hundred ravenous mouths.

"Go back," cried they all,—"go back to your own home! Your mother, beholding you safe and sound, will shed tears of joy; and what can she do more, should you win ever so great a victory? No matter for the golden apples! No matter for the king, your cruel cousin! We do not wish the dragon with the hundred heads to eat you up!"

The stranger seemed to grow impatient at these remonstrances. He carelessly lifted his mighty club, and let it fall upon a rock that lay half buried in the earth, near by. With the force of that idle blow, the great rock was shattered all to pieces. It cost the stranger no more effort to achieve this feat of a giant's strength than for one of the young maidens to touch her sister's rosy cheek with a flower.

"Do you not believe," said he, looking at the damsels with a smile, "that such a blow would have crushed one of the dragon's hundred heads?"

Then he sat down on the grass, and told them the

story of his life, or as much of it as he could remember from the day when he was first cradled in a warrior's brazen shield. While he lay there, two immense serpents came gliding over the floor, and opened their hideous jaws to devour him; and he, a baby of a few months old, had gripped one of the fierce snakes in each of his little fists, and strangled them to death. When he was but a stripling, he had killed a huge lion, almost as big as the one whose vast and shaggy hide he now wore upon his shoulders. The next thing that he had done was to fight a battle with an ugly sort of monster, called a hydra, which had no less than nine heads, and exceedingly sharp teeth in every one.

"But the dragon of the Hesperides, you know," observed one of the damsels, "has a hundred heads!"

"Nevertheless," replied the stranger, "I would rather fight two such dragons than a single hydra. For, as fast as I cut off a head, two others grew in its place; and, besides, there was one of the heads that could not possibly be killed, but kept biting as fiercely as ever, long after it was cut off. So I was forced to bury it under a stone, where it is doubtless alive to this very day. But the hydra's body and its eight other heads will never do any further mischief."

The damsels, judging that the story was likely to

last a good while, had been preparing a repast of bread and grapes, that the stranger might refresh himself in the intervals of his talk. They took pleasure in helping him to this simple food; and, now and then, one of them would put a sweet grape between her rosy lips, lest it should make him bashful to eat alone.

The traveler proceeded to tell how he had chased a very swift stag, for a twelvemonth together, without ever stopping to take breath, and had at last caught it by the antlers, and carried it home alive. And he had fought with a very odd race of people, half horses and half men, and had put them all to death, from a sense of duty, in order that their ugly figures might never be seen any more. Besides all this, he took to himself great credit for having cleaned out a stable.

"Do you call that a wonderful exploit?" asked one of the young maidens, with a smile. "Any clown in the country has done as much!"

"Had it been an ordinary stable," replied the stranger, "I should not have mentioned it. But this was so gigantic a task that it would have taken me all my life to perform it, if I had not luckily thought of turning the channel of a river through the stable-door. That did the business in a very short time!"

Seeing how earnestly his fair auditors listened, he next told them how he had shot some monstrous birds,

and had caught a wild bull alive and let him go again, and had tamed a number of very wild horses, and had conquered Hippolyta, the warlike queen of the Amazons. He mentioned, likewise, that he had taken off Hippolyta's enchanted girdle, and had given it to the daughter of his cousin, the king.

"Was it the girdle of Venus," inquired the prettiest of the damsels, "which makes women beautiful?"

"No," answered the stranger. "It had formerly been the sword-belt of Mars; and it can only make the wearer valiant and courageous."

"An old sword-belt!" cried the damsel, tossing her head. "Then I should not care about having it!"

"You are right," said the stranger.

Going on with his wonderful narrative, he informed the maidens that as strange an adventure as ever happened was, when he fought with Geryon, the six-legged man. This was a very odd and frightful sort of figure, as you may well believe. Any person, looking at his tracks in the sand or snow, would suppose that three sociable companions had been walking along together. On hearing his footsteps at a little distance, it was no more than reasonable to judge that several people must be coming. But it was only the strange man Geryon clattering onward, with his six legs!

Six legs, and one gigantic body! Certainly, he must have been a very queer monster to look at; and, my stars, what a waste of shoe-leather!

When the stranger had finished the story of his adventures, he looked around at the attentive faces of the maidens.

"Perhaps you may have heard of me before," said he, modestly. "My name is Hercules!"

"We had already guessed it," replied the maidens; "for your wonderful deeds are known all over the world. We do not think it strange any longer, that you should set out in quest of the golden apples of the Hesperides. Come, sisters, let us crown the hero with flowers!"

Then they flung beautiful wreaths over his stately head and mighty shoulders, so that the lion's skin was almost entirely covered with roses. They took possession of his ponderous club, and so entwined it about with the brightest, softest, and most fragrant blossoms, that not a finger's breadth of its oaken substance could be seen. It looked all like a huge bunch of flowers. Lastly, they joined hands, and danced around him, chanting words which became poetry of their own accord, and grew into a choral song, in honor of the illustrious Hercules.

And Hercules was rejoiced, as any other hero would

have been, to know that these fair young girls had heard of the valiant deeds which it had cost him so much toil and danger to achieve. But, still, he was not satisfied. He could not think that what he had already done was worthy of so much honor, while there remained any bold or difficult adventure to be undertaken.

"Dear maidens," said he, when they paused to take breath, "now that you know my name, will you not tell me how I am to reach the garden of the Hesperides?"

"Ah! must you go so soon?" they exclaimed. "You —that have performed so many wonders, and spent such a toilsome life—cannot you content yourself to repose a little while on the margin of this peaceful river?"

Hercules shook his head.

"I must depart now," said he.

"We will then give you the best directions we can," replied the damsels. "You must go to the sea-shore, and find out the Old One, and compel him to inform you where the golden apples are to be found."

"The Old One!" repeated Hercules, laughing at this odd name. "And, pray, who may the Old One be?"

"Why, the Old Man of the Sea, to be sure!" an-

swered one of the damsels. "He has fifty daughters, whom some people call very beautiful; but we do not think it proper to be acquainted with them because they have sea-green hair, and taper away like fishes. You must talk with this Old Man of the Sea. He is a sea-faring person, and knows all about the garden of the Hesperides; for it is situated in an island which he is often in the habit of visiting."

Hercules then asked whereabouts the Old One was most likely to be met with. When the damsels had informed him, he thanked them for all their kindness, —for the bread and grapes with which they had fed him, the lovely flowers with which they had crowned him, and the songs and dances wherewith they had done him honor,—and he thanked them, most of all, for telling him the right way,—and immediately set forth upon his journey.

But, before he was out of hearing, one of the maidens called after him.

"Keep fast hold of the Old One, when you catch him!" cried she, smiling, and lifting her finger to make the caution more impressive. "Do not be astonished at anything that may happen. Only hold him fast, and he will tell you what you wish to know."

Hercules again thanked her, and pursued his way, while the maidens resumed their pleasant labor of

making flower-wreaths. They talked about the hero, long after he was gone.

"We will crown him with the loveliest of our garlands," said they, "when he returns hither with the three golden apples, after slaying the dragon with a hundred heads.

Meanwhile, Hercules traveled constantly onward, over hill and dale, and through the solitary woods. Sometimes he swung his club aloft, and splintered a mighty oak with a downright blow. His mind was so full of the giants and monsters with whom it was the business of his life to fight, that perhaps he mistook the great tree for a giant or a monster. And so eager was Hercules to achieve what he had undertaken, that he almost regretted to have spent so much time with the damsels, wasting idle breath upon the story of his adventures. But thus it always is with persons who are destined to perform great things. What they have already done seems less than nothing. What they have taken in hand to do seems worth toil, danger, and life itself.

Persons who happened to be passing through the forest must have been affrighted to see him smite the trees with his great club. With but a single blow, the trunk was riven as by the stroke of lightning, and the broad boughs came rustling and crashing down.

Hastening forward, without ever pausing or looking behind, he by and by heard the sea roaring at a distance. At this sound, he increased his speed, and soon came to a beach, where the great surf-waves tumbled themselves upon the hard sand, in a long line of snowy foam. At one end of the beach, however, there was a pleasant spot, where some green shrubbery clambered up a cliff, making its rocky face look soft and beautiful. A carpet of verdant grass, largely intermixed with sweet-smelling clover, covered the narrow space between the bottom of the cliff and the sea. And what should Hercules espy there, but an old man fast asleep!

But was it really and truly an old man? Certainly, at first sight, it looked very like one; but, on closer inspection, it rather seemed to be some kind of a creature that lived in the sea. For, on his legs, and arms there were scales such as fishes have; he was web-footed and web-fingered, after the fashion of a duck; and his long beard, being of a greenish tinge, had more the appearance of a tuft of sea-weed than of an ordinary beard. Have you ever seen a stick of timber, that has been long tossed about by the waves, and has got all overgrown with barnacles, and, at last drifting ashore, seems to have been thrown up from the very deepest bottom of the sea? Well, the old man would have put you in mind of just such a wave-tossed spar!

But Hercules, the instant he set eyes on this strange figure, was convinced that it could be no other than the Old One, who was to direct him on his way.

Yes, it was the selfsame Old Man of the Sea whom the hospitable maidens had talked to him about. Thanking his stars for the lucky accident of finding the old man asleep, Hercules stole on tiptoe towards him, and caught him by the arm and leg.

"Tell me," cried he, before the Old One was well awake, "which is the way to the garden of the Hesperides?"

As you may easily imagine, the Old Man of the Sea awoke in a fright. But his astonishment could hardly have been greater than was that of Hercules, the next moment. For, all of a sudden, the Old One seemed to disappear out of his grasp, and he found himself holding a stag by the fore and hind leg! But still he kept fast hold. Then the stag disappeared, and in its stead there was a sea-bird, fluttering and screaming, while Hercules clutched it by the wing and claw! But the bird could not get away. Immediately afterwards, there was an ugly three-headed dog, which growled and barked at Hercules, and snapped fiercely at the hands by which he held him! But Hercules would not let him go. In another minute, instead of the three-headed dog, what should appear but Geryon, the six-

legged man-monster, kicking at Hercules with five of his legs, in order to get the remaining one at liberty! But Hercules held on. By and by, no Geryon was there, but a huge snake, like one of those which Hercules had strangled in his babyhood, only a hundred times as big; and it twisted and twined about the hero's neck and body, and threw its tail high into the air, and opened its deadly jaws as if to devour him outright; so that it was really a very terrible spectacle! But Hercules was no whit disheartened, and squeezed the great snake so tightly that he soon began to hiss with pain.

You must understand that the Old Man of the Sea, though he generally looked so much like the wave-beaten figurehead of a vessel, had the power of assuming any shape he pleased. When he found himself so roughly seized by Hercules, he had been in hopes of putting him into such surprise and terror by these magical transformations that the hero would be glad to let him go. If Hercules had relaxed his grasp, the Old One would certainly have plunged down to the very bottom of the sea, whence he would not soon have given himself the trouble of coming up, in order to answer any impertinent questions. Ninety-nine people out of a hundred, I suppose, would have been frightened out of their wits by the very first of his ugly shapes, and would have taken to their heels at once.

For, one of the hardest things in this world is, to see the difference between real dangers and imaginary ones.

But, as Hercules held on so stubbornly, and only squeezed the Old One so much the tighter at every change of shape, and really put him to no small torture, he finally thought it best to reappear in his own figure. So there he was again, a fishy, scaly, web-footed sort of personage with something like a tuft of seaweed at his chin.

"Pray, what do you want with me?" cried the Old One, as soon as he could take breath; for it is quite a tiresome affair to go through so many false shapes. "Why do you squeeze me so hard? Let me go, this moment, or I shall begin to consider you an extremely uncivil person!"

"My name is Hercules!" roared the mighty stranger. "And you will never get out of my clutch, until you tell me the nearest way to the garden of the Hesperides!"

When the old fellow heard who it was that had caught him, he saw, with half an eye, that it would be necessary to tell him everything that he wanted to know. The Old One was an inhabitant of the sea, you must recollect, and roamed about everywhere, like other sea-faring people. Of course, he had often heard of the fame of Hercules, and of the wonderful things

that he was constantly performing in various parts of the earth, and how determined he always was to accomplish whatever he undertook. He therefore made no more attempts to escape, but told the hero how to find the garden of the Hesperides, and likewise warned him of many difficulties which must be overcome, before he could arrive thither.

"You must go on, thus and thus," said the Old Man of the Sea, after taking the points of the compass, "till you come in sight of a very tall giant, who holds the sky on his shoulders. And the giant, if he happens to be in the humor, will tell you exactly where the garden of the Hesperides lies."

"And if the giant happens not to be in the humor," remarked Hercules, balancing his club on the tip of his finger, "perhaps I shall find means to persuade him!"

Thanking the Old Man of the Sea, and begging his pardon for having squeezed him so roughly, the hero resumed his journey. He met with a great many strange adventures, which would be well worth your hearing, if I had leisure to narrate them as minutely as they deserve.

It was in this journey, if I mistake not, that he encountered a prodigious giant, who was so wonderfully contrived by nature, that, every time he touched the

earth, he became ten times as strong as ever he had been before. His name was Antæus. You may see, plainly enough, that it was a very difficult business to fight with such a fellow; for, as often as he got a knock-down blow, up he started again, stronger, fiercer, and abler to use his weapons, than if his enemy had let him alone. Thus, the harder Hercules pounded the giant with his club, the further he seemed from winning the victory. I have sometimes argued with such people, but never fought with one. The only way in which Hercules found it possible to finish the battle, was by lifting Antæus off his feet into the air, and squeezing, and squeezing, and squeezing him, until finally, the strength was quite squeezed out of his enormous body.

When this affair was finished, Hercules continued his travels, and went to the land of Egypt, where he was taken prisoner, and would have been put to death, if he had not slain the king of the country, and made his escape. Passing through the deserts of Africa, and going as fast as he could, he arrived at last on the shore of the great ocean. And here, unless he could walk on the crests of the billows, it seemed as if his journey must needs be at an end.

Nothing was before him, save the foaming, dashing, measureless ocean. But, suddenly, as he looked towards

the horizon, he saw something, a great way off, which he had not seen the moment before. It gleamed very brightly, almost as you may have beheld the round, golden disk of the sun, when it rises or sets over the edge of the world. It evidently drew nearer; for, at every instant, this wonderful object became larger and more lustrous. At length, it had come so nigh that Hercules discovered it to be an immense cup or bowl, made either of gold or burnished brass. How it had got afloat upon the sea is more than I can tell you. There it was, at all events, rolling on the tumultuous billows, which tossed it up and down, and heaved their foamy tops against its sides, but without ever throwing their spray over the brim.

"I have seen many giants in my time," thought Hercules, "but never one that would need to drink his wine out of a cup like this!"

And, true enough, what a cup it must have been! It was as large—as large—but, in short, I am afraid to say how immeasurably large it was. To speak within bounds, it was ten times larger than a great mill-wheel; and, all of metal as it was, it floated over the heaving surges more lightly than an acorn-cup adown the brook. The waves tumbled it onward, until it grazed against the shore, within a short distance of the spot where Hercules was standing.

As soon as this happened, he knew what was to be done; for he had not gone through so many remarkable adventures without learning pretty well how to conduct himself, whenever anything came to pass a little out of the common rule. It was just as clear as daylight that this marvelous cup had been set adrift by some unseen power, and guided hitherward, in order to carry Hercules across the sea, on his way to the garden of the Hesperides. Accordingly, without a moment's delay, he clambered over the brim, and slid down on the inside, where, spreading out his lion's skin, he proceeded to take a little repose. He had scarcely rested, until now, since he bade farewell to the damsels on the margin of the river. The waves dashed, with a pleasant and ringing sound, against the circumference of the hollow cup; it rocked lightly to and fro and the motion was so soothing that it speedily rocked Hercules into an agreeable slumber.

His nap had probably lasted a good while, when the cup chanced to graze against a rock, and, in consequence, immediately resounded and reverberated through its golden or brazen substance, a hundred times as loudly as ever you heard a church-bell. The noise awoke Hercules, who instantly started up and gazed around him, wondering whereabouts he was. He was not long in discovering that the cup had floated

across a great part of the sea, and was approaching the shore of what seemed to be an island. And, on that island, what do you think he saw?

No; you will never guess it, not if you were to try fifty thousand times! It positively appears to me that this was the most marvelous spectacle that had ever been seen by Hercules, in the whole course of his wonderful travels and adventures. It was a greater marvel than the hydra with nine heads, which kept growing twice as fast as they were cut off; greater than the six-legged man-monster; greater than Antæus; greater than anything that was ever beheld by anybody, before or since the days of Hercules, or than anything that remains to be beheld, by travelers in all time to come. It was a giant!

But such an intolerably big giant! A giant as tall as a mountain; so vast a giant, that the clouds rested about his midst, like a girdle, and hung like a hoary beard from his chin, and flitted before his huge eyes, so that he could neither see Hercules nor the golden cup in which he was voyaging. And, most wonderful of all, the giant held up in his great hands and appeared to support the sky, which, so far as Hercules could discern through the clouds, was resting upon his head! This does really seem almost too much to believe.

Meanwhile, the bright cup continued to float onward, and finally touched the strand. Just then a breeze wafted away the clouds from before the giant's visage, and Hercules beheld it, with all its enormous features; eyes each of them as big as yonder lake, a nose a mile long, and a mouth of the same width. It was a countenance terrible from its enormity of size, but disconsolate and weary, even as you may see the faces of many people, nowadays, who are compelled to sustain burdens above their strength. What the sky was to the giant, such are the cares of the earth to those who let themselves be weighed down by them. And whenever men undertake what is beyond the just measure of their abilities they encounter precisely such a doom as had befallen this poor giant.

Poor fellow! He had evidently stood there a long while. An ancient forest had been growing and decaying around his feet; and oak trees, of six or seven centuries old, had sprung from the acorns, and forced themselves between his toes.

The giant now looked down from the far height of his great eyes, and, perceiving, Hercules, roared out, in a voice that resembled thunder, proceeding out of the cloud that had just flitted away from his face:

"Who are you, down at my feet there? And whence do you come, in that little cup?"

"I am Hercules!" thundered back the hero, in a voice pretty nearly or quite as loud as the giant's own. "And I am seeking for the garden of the Hesperides!"

"Ho! ho! ho!" roared the giant, in a fit of immense laughter. "That is a wise adventure, truly!"

"And why not?" cried Hercules, getting a little angry at the giant's mirth. "Do you think I am afraid of the dragon with a hundred heads?"

Just at this time, while they were talking together, some black clouds gathered about the giant's middle, and burst into a tremendous storm of thunder and lightning, causing such a pother that Hercules found it impossible to distinguish a word. Only the giant's immeasurable legs were to be seen, standing up into the obscurity of the tempest; and now and then a momentary glimpse of his whole figure, mantled in a volume of mist. He seemed to be speaking most of the time; but his big, deep, rough voice chimed in with the reverberations of the thunder-claps, and rolled away over the hills, like them. Thus, by talking out of season, the foolish giant expended an incalculable quantity of breath to no purpose; for the thunder spoke quite as intelligibly as he.

At last, the storm swept over, as suddenly as it had come. And there again was the clear sky, and the weary

giant holding it up, and the pleasant sunshine beaming over his vast height, and illuminating it against the background of the sullen thunder-clouds. So far above the shower had been his head, that not a hair of it was moistened by the rain-drops.

When the giant could see Hercules still standing on the sea-shore, he roared out to him anew.

"I am Atlas, the mightiest giant in the world! And I hold the sky upon my head!"

"So I see," answered Hercules. "But, can you show me the way to the garden of the Hesperides?"

"What do you want there?" asked the giant.

"I want three of the golden apples," shouted Hercules, "for my cousin, the king."

"There is nobody but myself," quoth the giant, "that can go to the garden of the Hesperides, and gather the golden apples. If it were not for this little business of holding up the sky, I would take a half dozen steps across the sea, and get them for you."

"You are very kind," replied Hercules. "And cannot you rest the sky upon a mountain?"

"None of them are quite high enough," said Atlas, shaking his head. "But, if you were to take your stand on the summit of that nearest one, your head would be pretty nearly on a level with mine. You seem to be

a fellow of some strength. What if you should take my burden on your shoulders, while I do your errand for you?"

Hercules, as you must be careful to remember, was a remarkably strong man; and though it certainly requires a great deal of muscular power to uphold the sky, yet, if any mortal could be supposed capable of such an exploit he was the one. Nevertheless, it seemed so difficult an undertaking, that, for the first time in his life, he hesitated.

"Is the sky very heavy?" he inquired.

"Why, not particularly so, at first," answered the giant, shrugging his shoulders. "But it gets to be a little burdensome, after a thousand years!"

"And how long a time," asked the hero, "will it take you to get the golden apples?"

"Oh, that will be done in a few minutes," cried Atlas. "I shall take ten or fifteen miles at a stride, and be at the garden and back again before your shoulders begin to ache."

"Well, then," answered Hercules, "I will climb the mountain behind you there, and relieve you of your burden."

The truth is, Hercules had a kind heart of his own, and considered that he should be doing the giant a favor, by allowing him this opportunity for a ramble.

And, besides, he thought that it would be still more for his own glory, if he could boast of upholding the sky than merely to do so ordinary a thing as to conquer a dragon with a hundred heads. Accordingly, without more words, the sky was shifted from the shoulders of Atlas, and placed upon those of Hercules.

When this was safely accomplished, the first thing that the giant did was to stretch himself; and you may imagine what a prodigious spectacle he was then. Next, he slowly lifted one of his feet out of the forest that had grown up around it; then, the other. Then all at once, he began to caper, and leap, and dance, for joy at his freedom; flinging himself nobody knows how high into the air, and floundering down again with a shock that made the earth tremble. Then he laughed —Ho! ho! ho!—with a thunderous roar that was echoed from the mountains, far and near, as if they and the giant had been so many rejoicing brothers. When his joy had a little subsided, he stepped into the sea; ten miles at the first stride, which brought him midleg deep; and ten miles at the second, when the water came just above his knees; and ten miles more at the third, by which he was immersed nearly to his waist. This was the greatest depth of the sea.

Hercules watched the giant as he still went onward; for it was really a wonderful sight, this immense hu-

man form, more than thirty miles off, half hidden in the ocean, but with his upper half as tall, and misty, and blue, as a distant mountain. At last the gigantic shape faded entirely out of view. And now Hercules began to consider what he should do, in case Atlas should be drowned in the sea, or if he were to be stung to death by the dragon with the hundred heads, which guarded the golden apples of the Hesperides. If any such misfortune were to happen, how could he ever get rid of the sky? And, by and by, its weight began already to be a little irksome to his head and shoulders.

"I really pity the poor giant," thought Hercules. "If it wearies me so much in ten minutes, how must it have wearied him in a thousand years!"

O my sweet little people, you have no idea what a weight there was in that same blue sky, which looks so soft and aerial above our heads! And there, too, was the bluster of the wind, and the chill and watery clouds, and the blazing sun, all taking their turns to make Hercules uncomfortable! He began to be afraid that the giant would never come back. He gazed wistfully at the world beneath him, and acknowledged to himself that it was a far happier kind of life to be a shepherd at the foot of a mountain, than to stand on its dizzy summit, and bear up the firmament with his might

and main. For, of course, as you will easily understand, Hercules had an immense responsibility on his mind, as well as a weight on his head and shoulders. Why, if he did not stand perfectly still, and keep the sky immovable, the sun would perhaps be put ajar! Or, after nightfall, a great many of the stars might be loosened from their places, and shower down like fiery rain, upon the people's heads! And how ashamed would the hero be, if, owing to his unsteadiness beneath its weight, the sky should crack, and show a great fissure quite across it!

I know not how long it was before, to his unspeakable joy, he beheld the huge shape of the giant, like a cloud, on the far-off edge of the sea. At his nearer approach, Atlas held up his hand, in which Hercules could perceive three magnificent golden apples, as big as pumpkins, all hanging from one branch.

"I am glad to see you again," shouted Hercules, when the giant was within hearing. "So you have got the golden apples?"

"Certainly, certainly," answered Atlas; "and very fair apples they are. I took the finest that grew on the tree, I assure you. Ah! it is a beautiful spot, that garden of the Hesperides. Yes; and the dragon with a hundred heads is a sight worth any man's seeing. After all, you had better have gone for the apples yourself."

"No matter," replied Hercules. "You have had a pleasant ramble, and have done the business as well as I could. I heartily thank you for your trouble. And now, as I have a long way to go, and am rather in haste—and as the king, my cousin, is anxious to receive the golden apples,—will you be kind enough to take the sky off my shoulders again?"

"Why, as to that," said the giant, chucking the golden apples into the air twenty miles high, or thereabouts, and catching them as they came down,—"as to that, my good friend, I consider you a little unreasonable. Cannot I carry the golden apples to the king, your cousin, much quicker than you could? As his majesty is in such a hurry to get them, I promise you to take my longest strides. And, besides, I have no fancy for burdening myself with the sky, just now."

Here Hercules grew impatient, and gave a great shrug of his shoulders. It being now twilight, you might have seen two or three stars tumble out of their places. Everybody on earth looked upward in affright, thinking that the sky might be going to fall next.

"Oh, that will never do!" cried Giant Atlas, with a great roar of laughter. "I have not let fall so many stars within the last five centuries. By the time you have stood there as long as I did, you will begin to learn patience!"

"What!" shouted Hercules, very wrathfully, "do you intend to make me bear this burden forever?"

"We will see about that, one of these days," answered the giant. "At all events, you ought not to complain, if you have to bear it the next hundred years, or perhaps the next thousand. I bore it a good while longer, in spite of the back-ache. Well, then, after a thousand years, if I happen to feel in the mood, we may possibly shift about again. You are certainly a very strong man, and can never have a better opportunity to prove it. Posterity will talk of you, I warrant it!"

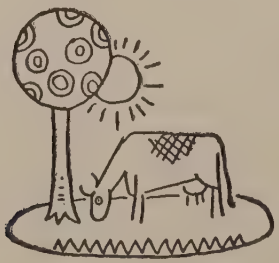
"Pish! a fig for its talk!" cried Hercules, with another hitch of his shoulders. "Just take the sky upon your head one instant, will you? I want to make a cushion of my lion's skin, for the weight to rest upon. It really chafes me, and will cause unnecessary inconvenience in so many centuries as I am to stand here."

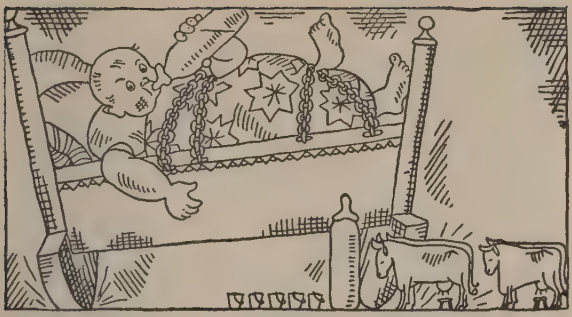
"That's no more than fair, and I'll do it!" quoth the giant; for he had no unkind feeling towards Hercules, and was merely acting with a too selfish consideration of his own case. "For just five minutes, then, I'll take back the sky. Only for five minutes, recollect! I have no idea of spending another thousand years as I spent the last. Variety is the spice of life, say I."

Ah, the thick-witted old rogue of a giant! He threw

down the golden apples, and received back the sky, from the head and shoulders of Hercules, upon his own, where it rightly belonged. And Hercules picked up the three golden apples, that were as big or bigger than pumpkins, and straightway set out on his journey homeward, without paying the slightest heed to the thundering tones of the giant, who bellowed after him to come back. Another forest sprang up around his feet, and grew ancient there; and again might be seen oak-trees, of six or seven centuries old, that had waxed thus aged betwixt his enormous toes.

And there stands the giant to this day; or, at any rate, there stands a mountain as tall as he, and which bears his name; and when the thunder rumbles about its summit, we may imagine it to be the voice of Giant Atlas, bellowing after Hercules!





PANTAGRUEL

THERE was once a baby born who was very different from most babies. He was a baby giant. His father, Gargantua, was a giant. So was his grandfather, Grangosier, and his great-grandfather, and so on.

The baby was named Pantagruel, and for this reason: for three years, three weeks, four days, and thirteen hours there had been no rain in the country of Utopia. The rivers were drained; the fountains dried up; there were no leaves upon the trees. The people suffered terribly from thirst. So Gargantua, who was king of Utopia as well as the baby's father, declared that his son, born during this drought, should be called Pantagruel, which means "All-thirsty."

Now Pantagruel, being a baby giant, needed more milk than other children. Four thousand six hundred

cows were milked every day to supply him with enough to drink.

Gargantua, fearful lest the child should hurt himself by falling out of his cradle, caused four great chains of iron to be made to bind him. Pantagruel tried and tried to break them, but the chains held him fast.

But see what happened once upon a great holiday when his father, Gargantua, made a sumptuous banquet to all the princes of his court. His nurses had left Pantagruel to busy themselves in helping with the feast.

First he tried to break the chains of the cradle with his arms, but could not, for they were forged too strong for him. Then he stamped and pushed so hard with his feet that he broke the foot-board of his cradle, although it was made of great timbers. As soon as he had his feet free, he slid down as well as he could till he had his soles to the floor, and then with a mighty effort he stood up, still carrying the cradle on his back.

In this manner Pantagruel entered the great hall where the guests were banqueting and startled the assembled company. He went up to the table, but because his arms were tied, could only reach the food by stooping and licking up with his tongue any morsel fallen to the floor.

When his father saw this he knew well enough that

the nurses had left the child without giving him anything to eat. So he commanded that the chains should be loosened.

As soon as he was free Pantagruel sat at table with the guests, and ate a very good dinner. When he had finished eating he broke his cradle into more than five-hundred thousand pieces with one blow of his fist, saying that he would never be found in it again.

Thus Pantagruel grew from day to day. While he was yet little, his father had a pretty cross-bow made for him, so he could shoot birds with it. It was so large that a number of men staggered under its weight. Men now call it the Great Cross-bow at Chantelle.

When Pantagruel was old enough Gargantua sent him to school with a tutor. First he went to Poitiers, then Toulouse, then Orleans, and at last to the great University of Paris.

Now when the people of Orleans heard that Pantagruel was leaving them they came to ask a favor of him. They had a huge bell which was to have hung in the tower of the church. But it was so heavy that no machine was strong enough to hoist it into its tower, and it had been lying on the ground for over two hundred and fourteen years. So the people begged this good giant to lift the bell in place. When he came to

the ground where it was, he lifted it up with his little finger, as easily as you would have done a hawk's bell.

At Paris Pantagruel studied so hard and became so learned that he could win in any debate, however clever his opponent. It was in Paris that Pantagruel met Panurge, who became his great friend and stayed with him all his life.

One day Pantagruel heard the news that his father, Gargantua, had been taken away by the queen of fairies, Morgan le Fay, to her country. Also as soon as the Dipsodes or Thirsty People, who were neighbors of the Utopians, had heard of this, they had invaded Utopia and were laying waste the land. They were even then besieging the capital city of the country where Pantagruel had been born.

So the young giant took Panurge and a few other friends and sailed with all speed to his troubled country. When they landed they met and destroyed a troop of six hundred horsemen, all but one, whom they took prisoner.

Pantagruel then began to question the prisoner thus — "My friend, tell us here the truth, and do not lie to us at all if you would not be flayed alive. Relate unto us the order, the number, and the strength of the army."

To which the prisoner answered, "Sir, know for a truth, that in the army there are three hundred giants, all armed with armor of proof, and wonderful great. Nevertheless, not fully so great as you, except one that is their head, named Loup-garou, who is armed from head to foot with anvils. Furthermore, there are one hundred and sixty-three thousand foot-soldiers, all armed with the skins of hobgoblins, all strong and valiant men; eleven thousand, four hundred men-at-arms; three thousand, six hundred double cannon, and harquebusiers without number."

"Yes," said Pantagruel, "but is the king there?"

"Yes, sir," said the prisoner. "He is there in person, and we call him Anarchus, King of the Dipsodes, which is to say Thirsty People; and his tent is guarded by the giants."

"It is enough," said Pantagruel; "come, brave boys, are you resolved to go with me?"

Panurge answered for them, "Heaven confound him that leaves you!"

"Up then, my lads," said Pantagruel, "and let us march along."

Then Pantagruel gave the prisoner a box of black cameleon thistle made into a paste, and commanded him to give it to the king and tell him, that if he were able to eat but one ounce of this paste without drink-

ing afterward, he might then be able to resist Pantagruel, without any fear of danger.

When the prisoner got to the camp of the Thirsty People he went directly to the king, and gave him the box of paste with the message Pantagruel had sent. The king immediately swallowed a spoonful of it. But, as soon as it was in his mouth and down his throat, it made him so terribly thirsty that he called for wine, and more wine, to cool his windpipe.

One after another the officers and soldiers tasted Pantagruel's paste. Then they, too, had to deluge their throats for relief. And soon everyone in camp fell asleep like pigs, from drinking so much to quench the thirst which the paste had given them.

Then came Pantagruel and his followers and some crept quietly into camp with firebrands and set fire to all the tents.

When the giants saw the camp in flames they snatched up King Anarchus and tied him to the back of one of their number. Then they rushed out of the city.

Pantagruel saw them coming, and all the weapon he had was the mast of the ship; but he was not afraid.

Loup-garou and all his giants approached, and seeing Pantagruel standing alone, thought to easily conquer him. So Loup-garou turned to his company and said,

"By Mahomet! if any of you dare fight with that great braggart over there, you shall die at these hands; I, alone, wish to fight with him! Meanwhile, you shall have rare sport in looking on."

So Pantagruel with his mast-head came toward Loup-garou. Now Loup-garou was covered with an armor of anvils and carried an enchanted mace which would cleave whatever it touched to a thousand pieces.

Loup-garou thought with one blow of this mace to vanquish Pantagruel outright. But Pantagruel was so nimble that he stepped aside just as the mace fell. Then he hit Loup-garou such a mighty blow with his mast that the giant roared aloud.

Again Loup-garou raised the enchanted mace to strike Pantagruel, and again the giant side-stepped. This time the mace crashed into a great rock, causing sparks to fly and flames to burst forth. It sank in seventy-three feet, the power of the blow was so great.

As Loup-garou struggled to pull the mace from the rock, Pantagruel came toward him to strike him. But, by bad luck, his mast touched against the handle of the enchanted mace and was immediately broken into a thousand pieces. Pantagruel did not know that the mace was enchanted and stood amazed at this.

In the meantime Loup-garou was drawing his mace out of the ground. Having finally succeeded in this,

he came toward Pantagruel shouting, "Now, villain, I will not fail to chop thee as small as minced meat, and keep thee henceforth from ever making any more men athirst!"

Then Pantagruel struck him such a blow with his foot that it made Loup-garou fall backwards. As he fell he called out, "Mahomet! Mahomet! Mahomet!" and died. When the company of giants heard his cry they all rushed to his aid.

And when Pantagruel saw those giants rushing up, he took Loup-garou's body by the two feet, and lifting it high in the air, he slashed right and left among the giants with it. There was not one of them that stood before him whom he threw not to the ground. With all this buffeting of giants, Loup-garou's head was cut clean off from his body.

At last, when Pantagruel saw that all the giants were dead, he threw the body of Loup-garou over the walls of the city, where it fell in the great Square.

After this wonderful victory, Pantagruel sent one of his friends into the besieged city to tell every one that the army of the Thirsty People had been conquered. The people received the news with great joy and flocked out to greet their own prince. Then they made a wonderful feast, with tables covered with all manner of

good things to eat and drink set out in the streets. And, as Pantagruel liked nothing better than feasting, he enjoyed himself hugely.

When the feast was over he called the people together and said, "My masters, we must strike the iron while it is hot. To-morrow we march against the Thirsty People in their own country and make it ours. I see this city is so full of people that they can scarce turn in the streets. I will, therefore, make a colony in Dipsody, and will give all who will follow me part of that fair country. Every one of you that will go along meet here on the morrow."

The next morning there were one million eight hundred and fifty-six thousand and eleven, besides women and little children waiting. So they all began to march after Pantagruel, straight into the country of the Thirsty People.

As Pantagruel marched along all the people of the invaded country surrendered themselves willingly to him. Only one city, Almirodes, held out against him.

When the army was marching toward this city to lay siege to it they were overtaken by a terrible storm. Pantagruel, not wanting his followers to get wet, put his tongue out half way, and it was so huge that it covered the whole army! Not one man got wet.

At this amazing sight the people of the city of Almirodes opened wide their gates. "We could never resist such a mighty giant," they said.

So Pantagruel ruled for his father, Gargantua, and tried to make the country peaceful and prosperous.

One day Gargantua came back from Fairyland. Pantagruel rushed out of the palace to meet him—

"My dear son!" said Gargantua.

"My dear and honored father!" said Pantagruel.

Then they went into the palace and feasted as they had never done before. Gargantua told Pantagruel all that he had seen and done in Fairyland. Pantagruel told Gargantua all that he had done in Utopia.

Then said Gargantua, "I praise God, my beloved son, that he has given you such wisdom and virtue. Had it not been for your bravery I had lost my kingdom while in Fairyland!"

THE GIANT'S STAIRS

On the road between Passage and Cork there is an old mansion called Ronayne's Court. It may be easily known from the stack of chimneys and the gable-ends, which are to be seen, look at it which way you will. Here it was that Maurice Ronayne and his wife Margaret Gould kept house, as may be learned to this day from the great old chimney-piece, on which is carved their arms. They were a mighty worthy couple, and had but one son, who was called Philip, after no less a person than the King of Spain.

Immediately on his smelling the cold air of this world the child sneezed, which was naturally taken to be a good sign of his having a clear head; and the subsequent rapidity of his learning was truly amazing, for on the very first day a primer was put into his hands he tore out the A, B, C page and destroyed it, as a

thing quite beneath his notice. No wonder, then, that both father and mother were proud of their heir, who gave such indisputable proofs of genius, or, as they called it in that part of the world, "genus."

One morning, however, Master Phil, who was then just seven years old, was missing, and no one could tell what had become of him: servants were sent in all directions to seek him, on horseback and on foot, but they returned without any tidings of the boy, whose disappearance altogether was most unaccountable. A large reward was offered, but it produced them no intelligence, and years rolled away without Mr. and Mrs. Ronayne having obtained any satisfactory account of the fate of their lost child.

There lived at this time, near Carrigaline, one Robert Kelly, a blacksmith by trade. He was what is termed a handy man, and his abilities were held in much estimation by the lads and the lasses of the neighborhood; for, independent of shoeing horses, which he did to great perfection, and making plow-irons, he interpreted dreams for the young women, sung "Arthur O'Bradles" at their weddings, and was so good-natured a fellow at a christening that he was gossip to half the country round.

Now it happened that Robin had a dream himself, and young Philip Ronayne appeared to him in it, at

the dead hour of the night. Robin thought he saw the boy mounted upon a beautiful white horse, and that he told him how he was made a page to the giant Mahon MacMahon, who had carried him off, and who held his court in the hard heart of the rock. "The seven years—my time of service—are clean out, Robin," said he, "and if you release me this night I will be the making of you for ever after."

"And how will I know," said Robin—cunning enough, even in his sleep—"but this is all a dream?"

"Take that," said the boy, "for a token,"—and at the word the white horse struck out with one of his hind legs, and gave poor Robin such a kick in the forehead that, thinking he was a dead man, he roared as loud as he could after his brains, and woke up, calling a thousand murders. He found himself in bed, but he had the mark of the blow, the regular print of a horse-shoe, upon his forehead as red as blood; and Robin Kelly, who never before found himself puzzled at the dream of any other person, did not know what to think of his own.

Robin was well acquainted with the Giant's Stairs —as, indeed, who is not that knows the harbor? They consist of great masses of rock, which, piled one above another, rise like a flight of steps from very deep water, against the bold cliff of Carrigmahon. Nor are they

badly suited for stairs to those who have legs of sufficient length to stride over a moderate-sized house, or to enable them to clear the space of a mile in a hop, step, and jump. Both these feats the giant MacMahon was said to have performed in the days of Finnian glory; and the common tradition of the country placed his dwelling within the cliff up whose side the stairs led.

Such was the impression which the dream made on Robin, that he determined to put its truth to the test. It occurred to him, however, before setting out on his adventure, that a plow-iron may be no bad companion, as, from experience, he knew it was an excellent knock-down argument, having on more occasions than one settled a little disagreement very quietly; so, putting one on his shoulder, off he marched, in the cool of the evening, through Glaun a Thowk (the Hawk's Glen) to Monkstown. Here an old gossip of his (Tom Clancey by name) lived, who, on hearing of Robin's dream, promised him the use of his skiff, and, moreover, offered to assist in rowing it to the Giant's Stairs.

After a supper, which was of the best, they embarked. It was a beautiful still night, and the little boat glided swiftly along. The regular dip of the oars, the distant song of the sailor, and sometimes the voice of a belated traveler at the ferry of Carrigaloe, alone

broke the quietness of the land and sea and sky. The tide was in their favor, and in a few minutes Robin and his gossip rested on their oars under the dark shadow of the Giant's Stairs. Robin looked anxiously for the entrance to the Giant's palace, which, it was said, may be found by any one seeking it at midnight; but no such entrance could he see. His impatience had hurried him there before that time, and after waiting a considerable space in a state of suspense not to be described, Robin, with pure vexation, could not help exclaiming to his companion, " 'Tis a pair of fools we are, Tom Clancey, for coming here at all on the strength of a dream."

"And whose doing is it," said Tom, "but your own?"

At the moment he spoke they perceived a faint glimmering of light to proceed from the cliff, which gradually increased until a porch big enough for a king's palace unfolded itself directly on a level with the water. They pulled the skiff directly towards the opening, and Robin Kelly, seizing his plow-iron, boldly entered with a strong hand and a stout heart. Wild and strange was that entrance, the whole of which appeared formed of grim and grotesque faces, blending so strangely each with the other that it was impossible to define any: the chin of one formed the nose of another; what appeared to be a fixed and stern eye, if

dwelt upon, changed to a gaping mouth; and the lines of the lofty forehead grew into a majestic and flowing beard. The more Robin allowed himself to contemplate the forms around him, the more terrific they became; and the stony expression of this crowd of faces assumed a savage ferocity as his imagination converted feature after feature into a different shape and character. Losing the twilight in which these indefinite forms were visible, he advanced through a dark and devious passage, whilst a deep and rumbling noise sounded as if the rock was about to close upon him, and swallow him up alive forever. Now, indeed, poor Robin felt afraid.

"Robin, Robin," said he, "if you were a fool for coming here, what in the name of fortune are you now?" But, as before, he had scarcely spoken, when he saw a small light twinkling through the darkness of the distance, like a star in the midnight sky. To retreat was out of the question; for so many turnings and windings were in the passage that he considered he had but little chance of making his way back. He, therefore, proceeded towards the bit of light, and came at last into a spacious chamber, from the roof of which hung the solitary lamp that had guided him. Emerging from such profound gloom, the single lamp afforded Robin

abundant light to discover several gigantic figures seated round a massive stone table, as if in serious deliberation, but no word disturbed the breathless silence which prevailed. At the head of this table sat Mahon MacMahon himself, whose majestic beard had taken root, and in the course of ages grown into the stone slab. He was the first who perceived Robin; and instantly starting up, drew his long beard from out the huge piece of rock in such haste and with so sudden a jerk that it was shattered into a thousand pieces.

"What seek you?" he demanded in a voice of thunder.

"I come," answered Robin, with as much boldness as he could put on, for his heart was almost fainting within him; "I come," said he, "to claim Philip Ronayne, whose time of service is out this night."

"And who sent you here?" said the giant.

" 'Twas of my own accord I came," said Robin.

"Then you must single him out from among my pages," said the giant; "and if you fix on the wrong one, your life is the forfeit. Follow me." He led Robin into a hall of vast extent, and filled with lights; along either side of which were rows of beautiful children, all apparently seven years old, and none beyond that age, dressed in green, and every one dressed exactly alike.

"Here," said Mahon, "you are free to take Philip Ronayne, if you will; but remember, I give but one choice."

Robin was sadly perplexed; for there were hundreds upon hundreds of children; and he had no very clear recollection of the boy he sought. But he walked along the hall, by the side of Mahon, as if nothing was the matter, although his great iron dress clanked fearfully at every step, sounding louder than Robin's own sledge battering on his anvil.

They had nearly reached the end without speaking, when Robin, seeing that the only means he had was to make friends with the giant, determined to try what effect a few soft words might have.

" 'Tis a fine, wholesome appearance the poor children carry," remarked Robin, "although they have been here so long shut out from the fresh air and the blessed light of heaven. 'Tis tenderly your honor must have reared them!"

"Aye," said the giant, "that is true for you; so give me your hand; for you are, I believe, a very honest fellow for a blacksmith."

Robin at the first look did not much like the huge size of the hand, and, therefore, presented his plow-iron, which the giant seizing, twisted in his grasp round and round again as if it had been a potato stalk.

On seeing this all the children set up a shout of laughter. In the midst of their mirth Robin thought he heard his name called; and all ear and eye, he put his hand on the boy who he fancied had spoken, crying out at the same time, "Let me live or die for it, but this is young Phil Ronayne."

"It is Philip Ronayne—happy Philip Ronayne," said his young companions; and in an instant the hall became dark. Crashing noises were heard, and all was in strange confusion; but Robin held fast his prize, and found himself lying in the gray dawn of the morning at the head of the Giant's Stairs with the boy clasped in his arms.

Robin had plenty of gossips to spread the story of his wonderful adventure: Passage, Monkstown, Carrigaline—the whole barong of Kerricurrihy rung with it.

"Are you quite sure, Robin, it is young Phil Ronayne you have brought back with you?" was the regular question; for although the boy had been seven years away, his appearance now was just the same as on the day he was missed. He had neither grown taller nor older in look, and he spoke of things which had happened before he was carried off as one awakened from sleep, or as if they had occurred yesterday.

"Am I sure? Well, that's a queer question," was Robin's reply; "seeing the boy has the blue eye of the

mother, with the foxy hair of the father; to say nothing of the purty wart on the right side of his little nose."

However Robin Kelly may have been questioned, the worthy couple of Ronayne's Court doubted not that he was the deliverer of their child from the power of the giant MacMahon; and the reward they bestowed on him equaled their gratitude.

Philip Ronayne lived to be an old man; and he was remarkable to the day of his death for his skill in working brass and iron, which it was believed he had learned during his seven years' apprenticeship to the giant Mahon MacMahon.

THE FOUNTAIN OF GIANT LAND

Long ago there lived a king who was blind. He had employed all the wise physicians in the kingdom but all to no avail. Not one of them did a single thing to restore his lost eyesight.

One day a little old woman came to the door of the palace begging alms. She said to the servant at the door, "I wish to say a word to the king who is blind. I know a sure cure for his blindness."

The servant led the little old woman into the king's presence. He was sitting upon the royal throne with his royal crown upon his head, but his blind eyes were bandaged and his royal face was sad because he could no longer see the bright sunlight shining upon the deep blue sea from the window of the palace, nor the lords and ladies of the court before him in their gor-

geous garments of purple and cloth of silver and cloth of gold, nor the face of the queen.

"O royal majesty," said the little old woman as she bowed low before him, "there is only one thing in the whole world which will restore your lost eyesight. It is the water of the fountain of Giantland. Bathe your eyes in that water and your lost eyesight will be restored at once."

"How can I obtain this wonderful water?" asked the king. "Giantland is a long distance from my kingdom and I do not know the way there." The king, the queen, and all the courtiers held their breaths to listen to the reply of the little old woman.

"Your Majesty will need to build a strong fleet to sail up the great river which leads to Giantland," she said. "The expedition will need as its leader a prince with a brave heart, for there will be many perils on the way to test his mettle. The fountain of Giantland is at the summit of a long steep rocky mountain, and it can be reached only by a prince who ascends the mountain looking neither to the right nor to the left. All along the way stand huge giants ready to enslave one the moment he stops looking straight ahead. If one should succeed in climbing the mountain the fountain is there at the summit, but it is guarded by a dragon.

One can approach it only when the dragon is asleep. Many princes have tried this quest and all have failed. If you should be able to send a prince brave enough and wise enough to succeed, there at the top of the mountain he will find a little old woman who will tell him whether or not the dragon is asleep."

With these words the little old woman withdrew from the royal presence. The king pondered over her advice. Then he sent for the three princes and told them the story. "O my father, I am brave and wise," said the eldest prince as soon as he had heard his father's words. "I will go upon this quest. I will bring you a bottle of the water of the fountain of Giantland that your sight may be restored."

The king ordered a great fleet to be prepared to sail up the river to Giantland. He collected an enormous sum of money to provide for the prince. The whole kingdom buzzed with preparation for the journey.

The prince planted an orange tree in the palace garden and said to his younger brother, "Keep close watch of this tree. If its leaves begin to wither you will know that some evil has befallen me. Come to my aid."

The eldest prince set out with a great fleet and his pockets lined with gold. He anchored in many harbors along the way. The prince was very fond of gaming

and there were many opportunities to play. Before he had reached Giantland he had lost the golden linings from his pockets.

After the prince had sailed up the great river which leads to Giantland he saw the steep rocky mountain towering before him. He set a bottle for the water of the fountain of Giantland carefully upon his head and slowly ascended the steep path. He kept his eyes fixed straight ahead.

Soon, however, he heard giant voices shouting at him. From the corners of his eyes he could see giant forms along the pathway. He forgot that he must look neither to the right nor to the left.

The moment the prince turned his eyes a giant immediately seized him and made him his slave. "You shall be my slave forever and a day," said the giant, "unless you have gold enough in your pockets to pay your ransom." The prince had no gold.

At home in the palace garden the leaves of the orange tree which the eldest prince had planted began to wither. His younger brother noticed it at once and went to the king. "O my father," said he, "I know that my brother has fallen into trouble. I must go to his aid."

The king at once prepared another great fleet. He

provided the prince with even more gold than his brother had taken with him. Every one in the whole kingdom did his best to hasten the preparations.

In the palace garden the prince planted a lemon tree and called the youngest prince into the garden. The youngest prince was playing with his dogs. He was a mere boy. "Keep close watch of this lemon tree while I am away," said the prince. "If its leaves begin to wither you will know that I am in trouble. Come to my aid."

The prince sailed up the great river which leads to Giantland. He anchored at many harbors and took part in many fiestas. By the time he had reached Giantland he had spent all his gold.

At home in the palace garden the youngest prince watched the lemon tree carefully every day. He watered it and pruned it. He took splendid care of it.

When at last the prince set out to climb the mountain which leads to the fountain of Giantland he felt very brave and very wise. He climbed steadily on and on, looking neither to the right nor to the left, even though he heard the voices of the giants shouting at him, and from the corners of his eyes could see the giant forms along the pathway.

Suddenly he heard the voice of his own brother,

the eldest prince, weeping as the giant gave him blows. At that sound he forgot all about looking straight ahead.

The moment the prince turned his eyes from the pathway straight ahead of him a giant seized him and made him his slave. "You shall be my slave forever and a day," said the giant, "unless you have gold enough to pay your ransom."

At home in the palace garden his little brother was watching the lemon tree. The very moment its leaves began to wither he noticed it and ran at once to the king. "O my father," he cried as soon as he was in the king's presence. "My brother is in trouble. I must go to his aid."

"You, my son, are only a lad," said the king. "How can you succeed when your two older brothers have failed? I cannot bear to let you go. You are all I have left. I prefer to remain blind the rest of my days. O, why did I ever listen to the story of the little old woman about the water of the fountain of Giantland?"

The youngest prince begged so hard to go that at length his father granted his request and prepared a fleet for him. He gave him all the gold he could collect in the kingdom.

The prince set out with brave heart. He sailed on his way steadily although at every harbor there were

voices which bade him linger. There were games and feasting and fair maidens.

Soon the youngest prince had reached Giantland. Above him rose the rough steep rocky mountain. Before he started to make the ascent he first stuffed cotton in his ears. Then he carefully placed upon his head a bottle to fill with the water of the fountain of Giantland.

He climbed up the steep mountain looking neither to the right nor to the left. Through the cotton in his ears he could faintly hear the giant voices calling him. From the corners of his eyes he could see the giant forms along the pathway. He resolutely kept his eyes fixed straight ahead and steadily climbed upward though the path was very rough and full of stones. The cotton in his ears prevented him from hearing the voices of his two brothers crying out when the giants beat them.

At length the lad was in sight of the fountain at the summit of the mountain. The little old woman was standing in the path, watching his ascent. As soon as he came near to her he took the cotton out of his ears so that he might hear what she had to say to him.

"You have arrived at a safe moment," the little old woman told him. "The dragon is asleep."

The little old woman helped the prince fill the bottle

with water from the fountain. Then she said, "The dragon which guards the fountain is an enchanted princess. No prince has ever before been brave enough and wise enough to reach this spot. In a year and a day from this moment her enchantment will be broken. Come again and claim her as your bride."

The little old woman gave the prince a ring, and the prince drew a ring from his own finger and gave it to the little old woman. "When the enchantment is broken put my ring upon the finger of the princess," he said. "Expect me back in a year and a day. I'll be sure to come."

The prince made his way back down the steep slope of the mountain, guarding his bottle full of the water of the fountain of Giantland with the utmost care. When he was half way down the mountain he saw his two brothers standing in his path.

"Viva," cried they. "You have been successful. You have a bottle full of the water from the fountain. Now if you also have your pockets full of gold you can pay our ransom and we will return with you to our father's kingdom."

"My pockets are still lined with gold which my father gave me," said the youngest prince. "Help yourselves. It is yours if it can serve you." There was more

than enough money to pay the ransom of his two older brothers.

When they were sailing down the great river towards home the two older brothers plotted against the youngest prince. "Come," said one to the other. "How can we let our father know that it was our little brother who succeeded in this quest? Let us cast our brother ashore. Then we will go together to our father with the water from the fountain of Giantland. When his sight is restored we will share his blessing and the honors of the kingdom. We will claim no knowledge of our youngest brother."

This is what the two eldest princes did. The youngest prince was cast ashore when he was asleep. After many long weary wanderings he found refuge in the hut of a poor fisherman and hired out to work for him.

The king's eyesight was restored immediately when he had bathed his eyes in the water from the fountain of Giantland. The two princes were given all the honors of the kingdom. The whole kingdom, however, mourned the loss of the little prince. The king and queen never gave up hoping that he would come back to them. The queen carefully laid away all the clothes which had belonged to the youngest prince so that they would be ready for him if he should return to

the palace. Every day she shook them out with loving care, so that the baratas and white ants would not eat holes in them.

A year and a day flew swiftly by. The huge dragon which had guarded the fountain of Giantland escaped from her enchantment and was restored to the form of a beautiful princess.

The little old woman and the princess watched and waited for the return of the prince according to his promise. "Some evil must surely have befallen the lad," said the little old woman. "Let us go in search of him. I know he was a lad who would not break his word."

The little old woman and the beautiful princess who wore the prince's own ring upon her finger came to the palace of the king. When the king had listened to the story they told, the guilty princes were called before him. They were forced to confess their evil deed. They were immediately thrown into prison. The anger of the whole kingdom was kindled against them.

Then the king and the queen and all the court sailed in their swiftest ships to the place where the little prince had been cast ashore. The little old woman and the beautiful princess who wore the prince's own ring upon her finger went with them. At length after much searching they found the fisherman's hut and the prince working for the fisherman.

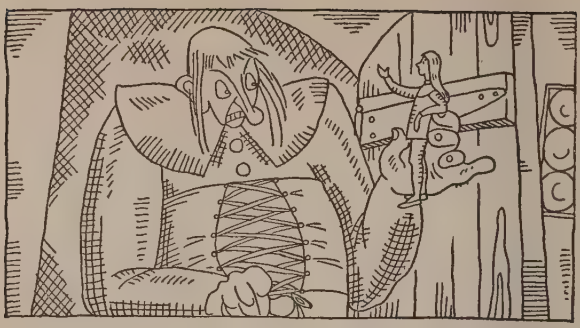
The king and the queen and all the court wept tears of joy when they beheld the youngest prince alive and well. The queen wept again when she noticed the poor rough clothing which the prince was wearing. She had brought with her the prince's favorite suit of cloth of gold which she had laid away carefully. When the prince put it on it was a trifle tight and a little bit too short for him, as he had grown so much in the year. Nevertheless he looked very handsome in it when he stood before the beautiful princess and claimed her as his bride.

The fisherman was greatly astonished at all the proceedings, for he had never dreamed that it was the king's son who had been working for him all the year and sleeping on a mat at his side on the floor of his rude hut.

"He may be a prince, but he is the most faithful lad who ever worked for me," said the fisherman.

"He is indeed a prince," cried the courtiers, "and the bravest, most faithful prince which any land in all the world ever boasted of."

"His princely deeds have proven to all the world that he is fit to reign as king over our fair land when I no longer live," said the king as he gave the prince and the beautiful princess his royal blessing.



YVONNE AND FINETTE

A TALE OF BRITTANY

Once upon a time there lived in Brittany a noble lord, who was called the Baron Kerver. His manor-house was the most beautiful in the province. It was a great Gothic castle with a groined roof and walls, covered with carving, that looked at a distance like a vine climbing over an arbor. On the first floor six stained glass balcony windows looked out on each side toward the rising and the setting sun. In the morning, when the baron, mounted on his dun mare, went forth into the forest, followed by his tall grayhounds, he saw at each window one of his daughters, with prayer-book in hand, praying for the house of Kerver, and who, with their fair curls, blue eyes, and clasped hands, might have been taken for six Madonnas in an azure niche. At evening, when the sun declined and the baron

returned homeward, after riding round his domains, he perceived from afar, in the windows looking toward the west, six sons, with dark locks and eagle gaze, the hope and pride of the family, that might have been taken for six sculptured knights at the portal of a church. For ten leagues round, all who wished to quote a happy father and a powerful lord named the Baron Kerver.

The castle had but twelve windows, and the baron had thirteen children. The last, the one that had no place, was a handsome boy of sixteen, by the name of Yvon. As usual, he was the best beloved. In the morning, at his departure, and at evening, on his return, the baron always found Yvon waiting on the threshold to embrace him. With his hair falling to his waist, his graceful figure, his willful air, and his bold bearing. Yvon was beloved by all the Bretons. At twelve years of age he had bravely attacked and killed a wolf with an ax, which had won him the name of Fearless. He deserved the title, for never was there a bolder heart.

One day, when the baron had stayed at home, and was amusing himself by breaking a lance with his squire, Yvon entered the armory in a traveling dress, and, bending one knee to the ground, "My lord and father," said he to the baron, "I come to ask your blessing. The

house of Kerver is rich in knights, and has no need of a child; it is time for me to go to seek my fortune. I wish to go to distant countries to try my strength, and to make myself a name."

"You are right, Fearless," replied the baron, more moved than he wished to appear. "I will not keep you back; I have no right to do so; but you are very young, my child; perhaps it would be better for you to stay another year with us."

"I am sixteen, my father; at that age you had already fought one of the proudest lords of the country. I have not forgotten that our arms are a unicorn ripping up a lion, and our motto, 'Onward!' I do not wish the Kervers to blush for their last child."

Yvon received his father's blessing, shook hands with his brothers, embraced his sisters, bid adieu to all the weeping vassals, and set out with a light heart.

Nothing stopped him on his way. A river appeared, he swam it; a mountain, he climbed it; a forest, he made his way through it with the sun for a guide. "On —the Kerver!" he cried, whenever he met with an obstacle, and went straight forward in spite of everything.

For three years he had been roaming over the world in search of adventures, sometimes conquering, sometimes conquered, always bold and gay, when he received an offer to go to fight the heathen of Norway.

To kill unbelievers and to conquer a kingdom was a double pleasure. Yvon enlisted twelve brave comrades, freighted a ship, and hoisted from the main-mast a blue standard, with the unicorn and motto of the Kervers.

The sea was calm, the wind fair, and the night serene. Yvon, stretched on the deck, watched the stars, and sought the one which cast its trembling light on his father's castle. All at once the vessel struck upon a rock; a terrible crash was heard; the sails fell like tinder; and an enormous wave burst over the deck, and swept away everything upon it.

"On—the Kerver!" cried Yvon, as soon as his head appeared above the water; and he began to swim as tranquilly as if he had been bathing in the lake of the old castle. Happily the moon was rising. Yvon saw, at a little distance, a black speck among the silvery waves —it was land. He approached it, not without difficulty, and finally succeeded in gaining a foot-hold. Dripping wet, exhausted with fatigue, and out of breath, he dragged himself on the sand; then, without more anxiety, said his prayers, and went to sleep.

In the morning, on awaking, Yvon tried to discover in what country he had been cast. He saw in the distance a house as large as a church, with windows fifty feet in height. He walked a whole day before reaching it, and at last found himself in front of an immense

door, with a knocker so heavy that it was impossible for a man to lift it.

Yvon took a great stone and began to knock. "Come in," cried a voice, that sounded like the roar of a bull. At the same instant the door opened, and the little Breton found himself in the presence of a giant not less than forty feet in height.

"What is your name, and what do you want here?" said the giant, taking up Yvon between his thumb and finger, and lifting him from the ground so as to see him better.

"My name is Fearless, and I am seeking my fortune," answered Yvon, looking at the monster with an air of defiance.

"Well, brave Fearless, your fortune is made," said the giant, in a mocking tone. "I am in need of a servant, and I will give you the place. You can go to work directly. This is the time for leading my sheep to the pasture; you may clean the stable while I am gone. I shall give you nothing else to do," added he, bursting into a laugh. "You see that I am a good master. Do your task, and, above all things, don't prowl about the house, or it will cost you your life."

"Certainly I have a good master; the work is not hard," thought Yvon, when the giant was gone. "I have plenty of time to sweep the stable. What shall I

do meanwhile to amuse myself? Shall I look about the house? Since I am forbidden to do so, it must be because there is something to see."

He entered the first room, and saw a large fireplace, in which a great pot was hanging, suspended from a hook. The pot was boiling, but there was no fire on the hearth.

"What does this mean?" thought Yvon; "there is some mystery here." He cut off a lock of his hair, dipped it into the pot, and took it out all coated with copper.

"Oh, oh!" cried he, "this is a new kind of soup; any body that swallows it must have an iron-clad stomach."

He went into the next room; there also a pot was suspended from a hook, and boiling without fire. Yvon dipped a lock of hair into it, and took it out all coated with silver.

"The broth is not so rich as this in the Kerver kitchen," thought he, "but it may have a better taste."

Upon this, he entered the third room. There also a pot was suspended from a hook, and boiling without fire. Yvon dipped a lock of hair into it, and took it out all coated with gold. It shone so brightly that it might have been mistaken for a sunbeam.

"Good!" cried he, "In our country the old women

have a saying, 'Everything gets worse and worse;' here it is just the contrary, everything gets better and better. What shall I find in the fourth room, I wonder—diamond soup?"

He pushed open the door, and saw something rarer than precious stones. This was a young woman of such marvelous beauty that Yvon, dazzled, fell on his knees at the sight.

"Unfortunate youth!" cried she, in a trembling voice, "what are you doing here?"

"I belong to the house," answered Yvon; "the giant took me into his service this morning."

"His service!" repeated the young girl. "May Heaven preserve you from it!"

"Why so?" said Yvon. "I have a good master; the work is not hard. The stable once swept, my task is finished."

"Yes, and how will you set to work to sweep it?" said the lady. "If you sweep it in the usual way, for every forkful of dung that you throw out of the door, ten will come in at the window. But I will tell you what to do. Turn the fork and sweep with the handle, and the dung will instantly fly out of itself."

"I will obey," said Yvon; upon which he sat down by the young girl and began to talk with her. She was the daughter of a fairy, whom the wretched giant had

made his slave. Friendship soon springs up between companions in misfortune. Before the end of the day, Finette (for that was the lady's name) and Yvon had already promised to belong to each other, if they could escape from their abominable master. The difficulty was to find the means.

Time passes quickly in this kind of talk. Evening was approaching, when Finette sent away her new friend, advising him to sweep the stable before the giant came home.

Yvon took down the fork, and attempted to use it as he had seen it done at his father's castle. He soon had enough of it. In less than a second, there was so much dung in the stable that the poor boy knew not which way to turn. He did as Finette had bid him; he turned the fork and swept with the handle, when behold! in the twinkling of an eye, the stable was as clean as if no cattle had ever entered it.

The task finished, Yvon seated himself on a bench before the door of the house. As soon as he saw the giant coming, he lolled back in his seat, crossed his legs, and began to sing one of his native airs.

"Have you cleaned the stable?" asked the giant, with a frown.

"Everything is ready, master," answered Yvon, without troubling himself to move.

"I am going to see for myself," howled the giant. He entered the stable grumbling, found everything in order, and came out furious.

"You have seen my Finette," cried he; "this trick did not come from your own head."

"What is myfinette?" asked Yvon, opening his mouth and shutting his eyes. "Is it one of the animals that you have in this country? Show it to me, master."

"Hold your tongue, fool," replied the giant; "you will see her sooner than you will want to."

The next morning the giant gathered his sheep together to lead them to the pasture; but, before setting out, he ordered Yvon to go in the course of the day in search of his horse, which was turned out to graze on the mountain. "After that," said he, bursting into a laugh, "you can rest all day long. You see that I am a good master. Do your task; and, above all things, don't prowl about the house, or I will cut off your head."

Yvon winked his eye as the giant left. "Yes, you are a good master," said he, between his teeth. "I understand your tricks; but, in spite of your threats, I shall go into the house, and talk with your Finette. It remains to be seen whether she will not be more mine than yours."

He ran to the young girl's room. "Hurrah!" cried

he; "I have nothing to do all day but to go to the mountain after a horse."

"Very well," said Finette; "how will you set to work to ride him?"

"A fine question," returned Yvon. "As if it was a difficult thing to ride a horse! I fancy that I have ridden worse ones than this."

"It is not so easy as you think," replied Finette; "but I will tell you what to do. Take the bit that hangs behind the stable-door, and, when the animal rushes toward you breathing fire and smoke from his nostrils, force it straight between his teeth; he will instantly become as gentle as a lamb, and you can do what you please with him."

"I will obey," said Yvon; upon which he sat down by the side of Finette, and began to talk to her. They talked of everything; but, however far their fancy strayed, they always came back to the point that they were promised to each other, and that they must escape from the giant. Time passes quickly in this kind of talk. The evening drew nigh. Yvon had forgotten the horse and the mountain, and Finette was obliged to send him away, advising him to bring back the animal before his master's arrival.

Yvon took down the bit that was hidden behind the stable-door, and hastened to the mountain, when lo!

a horse almost as large as an elephant rushed toward him at full gallop, breathing fire and smoke from his nostrils. Yvon firmly awaited the huge animal, and, the moment he opened his enormous jaws, thrust between them the bit; when lo! the horse instantly became as gentle as a lamb. Yvon made him kneel down, sprang on his back, and tranquilly returned home.

His task finished, Yvon seated himself on the bench before the door of the house. As soon as he saw the giant coming, he lolled back in his seat, crossed his legs, and began to sing one of his native airs.

"Have you brought back the horse?" asked the giant, with a frown.

"Yes, master," answered Yvon, without taking the trouble to move. "He is a fine animal, and does you credit. He is gentle, well trained, and as quiet as a lamb. He is feeding yonder in the stable."

"I am going to see for myself," howled the giant. He entered the stable grumbling, found everything in order, and came out furious.

"You have seen my Finette," said he; "this trick did not come from your own head."

"Oh, master," returned Yvon, opening his mouth and shutting his eyes, "it is the same story over again. What is this myfinette? Once for all, show me this monster."

"Hold your tongue, fool," returned the giant; "you will see her sooner than you will want to."

The third day at dawn the giant gathered his sheep together to lead them to the pasture; but, before setting out, he said to Yvon, "To-day you must go to the bottomless pit to collect my rent. After that," continued he, bursting into a laugh, "you may rest all day long. You see that I am a good master."

"A good master, so be it," murmured Yvon, "but the task is none the less hard. I will go and see my Finette, as the giant says, I have great need of her help to get through to-day's business."

When Finette had learned what was the task of the day, "Well," said she, "how will you go to work to do it?"

"I don't know," said Yvon, sadly; "I have never been to the bottomless pit, and, even if I knew the way there, I should not know what to ask for. Tell me what to do."

"Do you see that great rock yonder?" said Finette; "that is one of the gates of the bottomless pit. Take this stick, knock three times on the stone, and a demon will come out all streaming with flames, who will ask you how much you want. Take care to answer, 'No more than I can carry.' "

"I will obey," said Yvon; upon which he took a seat

by the side of Finette, and began to talk to her. He would have been there till this time if the young girl had not sent him to the great rock, when the evening drew nigh, to execute the giant's commands.

On reaching the spot pointed out to him, Yvon found a great rock of granite. He struck it three times with the stick, when lo! the rock opened, and a demon came forth all streaming with flames.

"What do you want?" he cried.

"I have come for the giant's rent," answered Yvon, calmly.

"How much do you want?"

"I never want any more than I can carry," replied the Breton.

"It is well for you that you do not," returned the man in flames. "Enter this cavern, and you will find what you want."

Yvon entered, and opened his eyes wide. Everywhere he saw nothing but gold, silver, diamonds, carbuncles, and emeralds. They were as numerous as the sands on the sea-shore. The young Kerver filled a sack, threw it across his shoulder, and tranquilly returned home.

His task finished, our Breton seated himself on the bench before the door of the house. As soon as he saw the giant coming, he lolled back in his seat, crossed

his legs, and began to sing one of his native airs.

"Have you been to the bottomless pit to collect my rent?" asked the giant, with a frown.

"Yes, master," answered Yvon, without taking the trouble to stir. "The sack is there right before your eyes; you can count it."

"I am going to see for myself," howled the giant. He undid the strings of the sack, which was so full that the gold and silver rolled in all directions.

"You have seen my Finette," he cried; "this trick did not come from your own head."

"Don't you know but one song?" said Yvon, opening his mouth and shutting his eyes. "It is the old story, myfinette, myfinette. Once for all, show me this thing."

"Well, well," roared the giant with fury, "wait till to-morrow, and you shall make her acquaintance."

"Thank you, master," said Yvon. "It is very good of you; but I see from your face that you are laughing at me."

The next morning the giant went out without giving Yvon any orders, which troubled Finette. At noon he returned without his flock, complaining of the heat and fatigue, and said to the young girl, "You will find a child, my servant, at the door. Cut his throat, put him into the great pot to boil, and call me when the broth

is ready." Saying this, he stretched himself on the bed to take a nap, and was soon snoring so loud that it seemed like thunder shaking the mountains.

Finette prepared a log of wood, took a large knife, and called Yvon. She pricked his little finger; three drops of blood fell on the log.

"That is enough," said Finette; "now help me to fill the pot."

They threw into it all that they could find—old clothes, old shoes, old carpets, and everything else. Finette then took Yvon by the hand, and led him through the three ante-chambers, where she ran in a mold three bullets of gold, two bullets of silver, and one bullet of copper, after which they quitted the house and ran toward the sea.

"On—the Kerver!" cried Yvon, as soon as he saw himself in the country. "Explain yourself, dear Finette; what farce are we playing now?"

"Let us run—let us run!" she cried; "if we do not quit this wretched island before night, it is all over with us."

"On—the Kerver!" replied Yvon, laughing, "and down with the giant!"

When he had snored a full hour, the giant stretched his limbs, half opened one eye, and cried, "Is it ready?"

"It is just beginning to boil," answered the first drop of blood on the log.

The giant turned over, and snored louder than ever for an hour or two longer. Then he stretched his limbs, half opened one eye, and cried out, "Do you hear me? Is it almost ready?"

"It is half done," answered the second drop of blood on the log.

The giant turned over, and slept an hour longer. Then he yawned, stretched his great limbs, and cried out impatiently, "Isn't it ready yet?"

"It is ready now," answered the third drop of blood on the log.

The giant sat up in bed, rubbed his eyes, and looked around to see who had spoken; but it was in vain to look; he saw nobody.

"Finette," howled he, "why isn't the table set?"

There was no answer. The giant, furious, sprang out of bed, seized a ladle, which looked like a caldron with a pitchfork for a handle, and plunged it into the pot to taste the soup.

"Finette!" howled he, "you haven't salted it. What sort of a soup is this? I see neither meat nor vegetables."

No; but, in return, he saw his carpet, which had not quite all boiled to pieces. At this sight he fell into

such a fit of rage that he could not keep his feet.

"Villains!" said he, "you have played a fine trick on me; but you shall pay for it."

He rushed out with a stick in his hand, and strode along at such a rate that in a quarter of an hour he discovered the two fugitives still far from the sea-shore. He uttered such a cry of joy that the earth shook for twelve leagues around.

Finette stopped, trembling. Yvon clasped her to his heart.

"On—the Kerver!" said he; "the sea is not far off; we shall be there before our enemy."

"Here he is! here he is!" cried Finette, pointing to the giant not a hundred yards off; "we are lost if this charm does not save us."

She took the copper bullet and threw it on the ground, saying,

"Copper bullet, save us, pray,
Stop the giant on his way."

And behold, the earth cracked apart with a terrific noise, and an enormous fissure, a bottomless pit, stopped the giant just as he was stretching out his hand to seize his prey.

"Let us fly!" cried Finette, grasping the arm of Yvon,

"LET US FLY!" CRIED FINETTE.

who was gazing at the giant with a swaggering air, defying him to come on.

The giant ran backward and forward along the abyss like a bear in his cage, seeking a passage everywhere and finding none; then, with a furious jerk, he tore up an immense oak by the roots, and flung it across the gap. The branches of the oak nearly crushed the children as it fell. The giant seated himself astride the huge tree, which bent under his weight, and crept slowly along, suspended between heaven and earth, entangled as he was among the branches. When he reached the other side, Yvon and Finette were already on the shore, with the sea rolling before them.

Alas! there was neither bark nor ship. The fugitives were lost. Yvon, always brave, picked up stones to attack the giant, and to sell his life dearly. Finette, trembling with fear, threw one of the silver bullets into the sea, saying,

"Silver bullet, bright and pliant,
Save us from this frightful giant."

Scarcely had she spoken the magic words when a beautiful ship rose from the waves like a swan spreading its white wings. Yvon and Finette plunged into the sea; a rope was thrown them by an invisible hand;

and when the furious giant reached the shore, the ship was receding rapidly at full sail, leaving behind it a long furrow of shining foam.

Giants do not like the water. Finette's master roared with rage when he saw his slaves about to escape him. He ran hesitatingly along the shore; he flung huge masses of rock after the vessel, which happily fell by the side of it, and only made great black holes in the water; and, finally, mad with anger, he plunged head foremost into the sea, and began to swim after the ship with frightful speed. At each stroke he advanced forty feet, blowing like a whale, and like a whale cleaving the waves. By degrees he gained on his enemies; one more effort would bring him within reach of the rudder, and already he was stretching out his arm to seize it, when Finette threw the second silver bullet into the sea, and cried, in tears,

"Silver bullet, bright and pliant,
Save us from this frightful giant."

Suddenly from the midst of the foam darted forth a gigantic swordfish, with a sword at least twenty feet in length. It rushed straight toward the giant, who scarcely had time to dive, chased him under the water, pursued him on the top of the waves, followed him closely whichever way he turned, and forced him to

flee as fast as he could to his island, where he finally landed with the greatest difficulty, and fell upon the shore, dripping, worn out, and conquered.

"On—the Kerver!" cried Yvon; "we are saved."

"Not yet," said Finette, trembling. "The giant has a witch for a godmother; I fear that she will revenge on me the insult offered to her godson. My art tells me, my dear Yvon, that if you quit me a single instant until you give me your name in the chapel of the Kervers, I have everything to dread."

"By the unicorn of my ancestors," cried Yvon, "you have the heart of a hare and not of a hero! Am I not here? Am I going to abandon you? Do you believe that Providence has saved us from the fangs of that monster to wreck us in port?"

He laughed so gayly that Finette laughed in turn at the terror that had seized her.

The rest of the voyage passed off admirably. An invisible hand seemed to impel the ship onward. Twenty days after their departure the boat landed Yvon and Finette near Kerver Castle. Once on shore, Yvon turned to thank the crew. No one was there. Both boat and ship had vanished under the waves, leaving no trace behind but a gull on the wing.

Yvon recognized the spot where he had so often gathered shells and chased the crabs to their holes

when a child. Half an hour's walk would bring him in sight of the towers of the old castle. His heart beat; he looked tenderly at Finette, and saw, for the first time, that her dress was fantastic, and unworthy of a woman about to enter the noble house of Kerver.

"My dear child," said he, "the baron, my father, is a noble lord, accustomed to be treated with respect. I cannot introduce you to him in this gypsy dress; neither is it fitting that you should enter our great castle on foot like a peasant. Wait for me a few moments, and I will bring you a horse and one of my sister's dresses. I wish you to be received like a lady of high degree. I wish my father himself to meet you on your arrival, and hold it an honor to give you his hand."

"Yvon, Yvon," cried Finette, "do not quit me, I beg you. Once returned to your castle, I know that you will forget me."

"Forget you!" exclaimed Yvon. "If any one else were to offer me such an insult, I would teach him with my sword to suspect a Kerver. Forget you, my Finette! you do not know the fidelity of a Breton."

That the Bretons are faithful, no one doubts; but that they are still more headstrong is a justice that none will deny them. It was useless for poor Finette to plead in her most loving tones; she was forced to yield. She resigned herself with a heavy heart, and said to Yvon,

"Go without me, then, to your castle, but only stay long enough to speak to your friends; then go straight to the stable, and return as soon as possible. You will be surrounded by people; act as if you saw no one, and, above all, do not eat or drink anything whatever. Should you take only a glass of water, evil would come upon us both."

Yvon promised and swore all that Finette asked, but he smiled in his heart at this feminine weakness. He was sure of himself.

On entering the old castle he could scarcely recognize its dark walls. All the windows were festooned with leaves and flowers within and without; the courtyard was strewn with fragrant grass; on one side were spread tables groaning under their weight; on the other, musicians, mounted on casks, were playing merry airs. The vassals, dressed in their holiday attire, were singing and dancing, and dancing and singing. It was a great day of rejoicing at the castle. The baron himself was smiling. It is true that he had just married his fifth daughter to the Knight of Kervalec. This marriage added another quartering to the illustrious escutcheon of the Kervers.

Yvon, recognized and welcomed by all the crowd, was instantly surrounded by his relatives, who embraced him and shook him by the hand. Where had

he been? Where did he come from? Questions were showered upon him without reply. Yvon respectfully kissed his father's hand, hastened to his sisters' chamber, took two of their finest dresses, went to the stable, saddled a pony, mounted a beautiful Spanish jennet, and was about to quit the castle, when he found his relatives, friends, squires, and vassals all standing in his way, their glasses in their hands, ready to drink their young lord's health and his safe return.

Yvon gracefully thanked them, bowed and made his way by degrees through the crowd, when, just as he was about to cross the drawbridge, a fair-haired lady, with a haughty and disdainful air, a stranger to him, a sister of the bridegroom, perhaps, approached him, holding a pomegranate in her hand.

"My handsome knight," said she, with a singular smile, "you surely will not refuse a lady's first request. Taste this pomegranate, I entreat you. If you are neither hungry nor thirsty after so long a journey, I suppose at least that you have not forgotten the laws of politeness."

Yvon dared not refuse this appeal. Scarcely had he tasted the pomegranate when he looked round him like a man waking from a dream.

"What am I doing on this horse?" thought he. "What means this pony that I am leading? Is not my

place in my father's house at my sister's wedding? Why should I quit the castle?"

He threw the bridle to one of the grooms, leaped lightly to the ground, and offered his hand to the fair-haired lady, who accepted him as her attendant on the spot, and gave him her bouquet to hold as a special mark of favor.

Before the evening was over there was another betrothed couple in the castle. Yvon had pledged his faith to the unknown lady, and Finette was forgotten.

Poor Finette, seated on the sea-shore, waited all day long for Yvon, but Yvon did not come. The sun was setting in the fiery waves, when Finette rose, sighing, and took the way to the castle in her turn. She had not walked long in a steep road, bordered with thorn trees in blossom, when she found herself in front of a wretched hut, at the door of which stood an old woman about to milk her cow. Finette approached her, and, making a low courtesy, begged a shelter for the night.

The old woman looked at the stranger from head to foot. With her buskins trimmed with fur, her full red petticoat, her blue jacket edged with jet, and her diadem, Finette looked more like an Egyptian princess than a Christian. The old woman frowned, and, shaking her fist in the face of the poor girl, "Begone,

witch!" she cried; "there is no room for you in this honest house."

"My good mother," said Finette, "give me only a corner of the stable."

"Oh," said the old woman, laughing, "so you want a corner of the stable, do you! Well, you shall have it, if you will fill my milk-pail with gold."

"It is a bargain," said Finette, quietly. She opened a leather purse which she wore at her belt, took from it a golden bullet, and threw it into the milk-pail, saying,

"Golden bullet, precious treasure,
Save me, if it be thy pleasure."

And behold, the pieces of gold began to dance about in the pail; they rose higher and higher, flapping about like fish in a net, while the old woman on her knees gazed with wonder at the sight.

When the pail was full the old woman rose, put her arm through the handle, and said to Finette, "Madam, all is yours, the house, the cow, and everything else. Hurrah! I am going to the town to live like a lady with nothing to do. Oh dear, how I wish I were only sixty!" And, shaking her crutch, without looking backward, she set out on a run toward Kerver Castle.

Finette entered the house. It was a wretched hovel,

dark, low, damp, bad-smelling, and full of dust and spiders' webs—a horrible refuge for a woman accustomed to living in the giant's grand castle. Without seeming troubled, Finette went to the hearth, on which a few green boughs were smoking, took another golden bullet from her purse, and threw it into the fire, saying,

"Golden bullet, precious treasure,
Save me, if it be thy pleasure."

The gold melted, bubbled up, and spread all over the house like running water, and behold! the whole cottage, the walls, the thatch, the wooden rocking-chair, the stool, the chest, the bed, the cow's horns, everything, even to the spiders in their webs, was turned to gold. The house gleamed in the moonlight, among the trees, like a star in the night.

When Finette had milked the cow and drunk a little new milk, she threw herself on the bed without undressing, and, worn out by the fatigue of the day, fell asleep in the midst of her tears.

Old women do not know how to hold their tongues. Finette's hostess had scarcely reached the village when she hastened to the house of the steward. He listened to the old woman's story, shook his head, and said that it looked like witchcraft; then he mysteriously

brought a pair of scales, weighed the guineas, which he found to be genuine and of full weight, kept as many of them as he could, and advised the owner to tell no one of this strange adventure. "If it should come to the ears of the bailiff or the seneschal," said he, "the least that would happen to you, mother, would be to lose every one of these beautiful bright guineas."

The old woman thanked the steward for his advice, and promised to follow it. She kept her word so well that at noon the next day there was not a boy of six in the village that did not point his finger at the old woman, while the very dogs seemed to bark in their language, "Here is the old woman with her guineas."

A girl that amuses herself by filling milk-pails with gold is not to be found every day. Even though she should be something of a witch, such a girl would none the less be a treasure in a family. The steward, who was a bachelor, made this wise reflection that night on going to bed. Before dawn he rose to make his rounds in the direction of the stranger's cottage. By the first gleam of day he spied something shining in the distance like a light among the woods. On reaching the place, he was greatly surprised to find a golden cottage instead of the wretched hut that had stood there the day before. But, on entering the house, he was much more surprised and delighted to find a

beautiful young girl, with raven hair, sitting by the window, and spinning on her distaff with the air of an empress.

Like all men, the steward knew at the bottom of his heart, that there was not a woman in the world that would not be too happy to give him her hand. Without hesitating, therefore, he declared to Finette that he had come to marry her. The young girl burst out laughing, upon which the steward flew into a passion.

"Take care!" said he, in a terrible voice; "I am the master here. No one knows who you are or whence you came. The gold that you gave the old woman has raised suspicions. There is magic in this house. If you do not accept me for a husband this very instant, I will arrest you, and before night, perhaps, a witch will be burned before Kerver Castle."

"You are very amiable," said Finette, with a charming grimace; "you have a peculiar way of paying court to ladies. Even when they have decided not to refuse, a gallant man spares their blushes."

"We Bretons are plain-spoken people," replied the steward; "we go straight to the point. Marriage or prison, which do you choose?"

"Oh!" cried Finette, laying down the distaff, "there are the firebrands falling all over the room."

"Don't trouble yourself," said the steward, "I will pick them up."

"Lay them carefully on the top of the ashes," returned Finette. "Have you the tongs?"

"Yes," said the steward, picking up the crackling coals.

"Abracadabra!" cried Finette, rising. "Villain, may the tongs hold you, and may you hold the tongs till sunset!"

No sooner said than done. The wicked steward stood there all day with the tongs in his hand, picking up and throwing back the burning coals that snapped in his face, and the hot ashes that flew into his eyes. It was useless for him to shout, pray, weep, and blaspheme; no one heard him. If Finette had stayed at home, she would doubtless have taken pity on him; but, after putting the spell upon him, she hastened to the seashore, where, forgetting everything else, she watched for Yvon in vain.

The moment that the sun set, the tongs fell from the steward's hands. He did not stop to finish his errands, but ran as if the devil or justice were at his heels. He made such leaps, he uttered such groans, he was so blackened, scorched, and benumbed, that every one in the village was afraid of him, thinking that he was mad.

At evening, when Finette returned home in despair, instead of the steward, she found another visitor. The bailiff had heard the story of the guineas, and had also made up his mind to marry the stranger. He was not rough, like the steward, but a fat, good-natured man, that could not speak without bursting into a laugh, though at heart he was not less obstinate or less threatening than his predecessor. Finette entreated the bailiff to leave her alone. He laughed, and hinted to her, in a good-natured way, that, by right of his office, he had the power to imprison and hang people without process of law. She clasped her hands, and begged him with tears to go. For his only answer, he took a roll of parchment from his pocket, wrote on it a contract of marriage, and declared to Finette that, should he stay all night, he would not leave the house till she had signed the promise.

"Why," said Finette, "I might decide to do as you wish if I were sure of finding a good husband in you; but I am afraid."

"Of what, my dear child?" asked the bailiff, smiling, and already as proud as a peacock.

"Do you think," said she, with a pettish air, "that a good husband would leave that door wide open, and not know that his wife was freezing with the cold?"

"You are right, my dear," said the bailiff; "it was very stupid in me. I will go and shut it."

"Have you hold of the knob?" asked Finette.

"Yes, my charmer," answered the happy bailiff; "I am just shutting the door."

"Abracadabra!" cried Finette. "May you hold the door, villain, and may the door hold you till daybreak."

And behold, the door opened and shut, and slammed against the walls like an eagle flapping its wings. You may judge what a dance the poor captive kept up all night. Sometimes the door swung open with him in the street; sometimes it flew back and crushed him against the wall. He swung backward and forward, screaming, swearing, weeping, and praying, but all in vain; the door was deaf, and Finette asleep.

At daybreak his hands unclasped, and he fell in the road head foremost. Without waiting to finish his errand, he ran as if the Moors were after him. He did not even turn round, for fear that the door might be at his heels. Fortunately for him, all were still asleep when he reached the village, and he could hide himself in bed without any one seeing his deplorable plight.

When Finette opened her eyes, she saw by her bedside a tall man dressed in black, with a velvet cap and a sword. It was the seneschal of the barony of Kerver. He stood with his arms folded, gazing at Finette

in a way that chilled the very marrow of her bones.

"What is your name, vassal?" said he, in a voice of thunder.

"Finette, at your service, my lord," replied she, trembling.

"Is this house and furniture yours?"

"Yes, my lord, everything, at your service."

"I mean that it shall be at my service," returned the seneschal, sternly. "Rise, vassal! I do you the honor to marry you, and to take yourself, your person, and your property under my guardianship."

"My lord," returned Finette, "this is much too great an honor for a poor girl like me, a stranger, without friends or kindred."

"Be silent, vassal!" replied the seneschal. "I am your lord and master; I have nothing to do with your advice. Sign this paper."

For her only answer, Finette leaped out of the window, and ran to the stable. The seneschal pursued her thither; but, on attempting to enter, an unexpected obstacle stopped him. The frightened cow had backed at the sight of the young girl, and stood in the doorway with Finette clinging to her horns, and making of her a sort of buckler.

"You shall not escape me, sorceress!" cried the seneschal, and, with a grasp like that of Hercules, he seized

the cow by the tail, and dragged her out of the stable.

"Abracadabra!" cried Finette. "May the cow's tail hold you, villain, and may you hold the cow's tail till you have both been around the world together."

And behold, the cow darted off like lightning, dragging the unhappy seneschal after her. Nothing stopped the two inseparable comrades; they rushed over mountains and valleys, crossed marshes, rivers, quagmires, and brakes, glided over the seas without sinking, and at length, after thirty-six hours of a journey, the like of which had never been seen, both stopped out of breath in the public square of the village.

A seneschal harnassed to a cow's tail is a sight not to be seen every day; and all the peasants in the neighborhood crowded together to wonder at the spectacle. But, torn as he was by the cactuses of Barbary and the thickets of Tartary, the seneschal had lost nothing of his haughty air. With a threatening gesture, he dispersed the rabble, and limped to his house to taste the repose of which he began to feel the need.

While the steward, the bailiff, and the seneschal were experiecing these little unpleasantnesses, of which they did not think it proper to boast, preparations were being made for a great event at Kerver Castle, namely, the marriage of Yvon and the fair-haired lady. Two days had passed in these preparations, and all the

friends of the family had gathered together for twenty leagues round, when, one fine morning Yvon and his bride, with the Baron and Baroness Kerver, took their seats in a great carriage adorned with flowers, and set out for the celebrated church of St. Maclou.

A hundred knights, in full armor, mounted on horses decked with ribbons, rode on each side of the betrothed couple, each with his vizor raised and his lance at rest in token of honor. By the side of each baron, a squire, also on horseback, carried the seignioral banner. At the head of the procession rode the seneschal, with a gilded staff in his hand. Behind the carriage gravely walked the bailiff, followed by the vassals, while the steward railed at the serfs, a noisy and curious rabble.

As they were crossing a brook, a league from the castle, one of the traces of the carriage broke, and they were forced to stop. The accident repaired, the coachman cracked his whip, and the horses started with such force that the new trace broke in three pieces. Six times this provoking piece of wood was replaced, and six times it broke anew, without drawing the carriage from the hole where it was wedged.

Every one had a word of advice to offer; even the peasants, as wheelwrights and carpenters, were not the last to make a show of their knowledge. This gave

the steward courage; he approached the baron, took off his cap, and, scratching his head, "My lord," said he, "in the house that you see shining yonder among the trees, there lives a woman who does things such as nobody else can do. Only persuade her to lend you her tongs, and, in my opinion, they will hold till morning."

The baron made a sign, and ten peasants ran to the cottage of Finette, who very obligingly lent them her gold tongs. They were put in the place of the trace; the coachman cracked his whip, and off went the carriage like a feather.

Every one rejoiced, but the joy did not last long. A hundred steps farther, lo! the bottom of the carriage gave way; little more, and the noble Kerver family would have sunk quite out of sight. The wheelwrights and the carpenters set to work at once; they sawed planks, nailed them down fast, and in the twinkling of an eye repaired the accident. The coachman cracked his whip, and the horses started, when behold! half of the carriage was left behind; the Baroness Kerver sat motionless by the side of the bride, while Yvon and the baron were carried off at full gallop. Here was a new difficulty. Three times was the carriage mended, three times it broke anew. There was every reason to believe that it was enchanted.

Every one had a word of advice to offer. This gave the bailiff courage. He approached the baron, and said, in a low tone, "My lord, in the house that you see shining yonder among the trees, there lives a woman who does things such as nobody else can do. Only persuade her to lend you her door for the bottom of the carriage, and, in my opinion, it will hold all morning."

The baron made a sign, and twenty peasants ran to the cottage of Finette, who very obligingly lent them her gold door. They put it in the bottom of the carriage, where it fitted as if it had been made expressly for it. The party took their seats in the carriage, the coachman cracked his whip, the church was in sight, and all the troubles of the journey seemed ended.

Not at all! Suddenly the horses stopped, and refused to draw. There were four of them. Six, eight, ten, twenty-four more were put to the carriage, but all in vain; it was impossible to stir them. The more they were whipped, the deeper the wheels sunk into the ground like the coulter of a plow.

What were they to do? To go on foot would have been a disgrace. To mount a horse, and ride to the church like simple peasants, was not the custom of the Kervers. Meanwhile the day was declining, and the hour for the marriage had passed.

Every one had a word of advice to offer. This gave the seneschal courage. He approached the baron, alighted from his horse, raised his velvet cap, and said, "My lord, in the house that you see shining yonder among the trees, there lives a woman who does things such as nobody else can do. Only persuade her to lend you her cow to draw the carriage, and, in my opinion, she will draw it till morning."

The baron made a sign, and thirty peasants ran to the cottage of Finette, who very obligingly lent them her golden-horned cow.

To go to church drawn by a cow was not, perhaps, what the ambitious bride had dreamed of, but it was better than to remain unmarried in the road. The heifer was harnessed, therefore, before the four horses, and every body looked on anxiously to see what this boasted animal would do.

But, before the coachman had time to crack his whip, lo! the cow started off as if she were about to go around the world anew. Horses, carriage, baron, betrothed, coachman, all were hurried away by the furious animal. In vain the knights spurred their horses to follow the pair; in vain the peasants ran at full speed, taking the cross-road and cutting across the meadows. The carriage flew as if it had wings.

On reaching the door of the church, the party, a

little disturbed by this rapid journey, would not have been sorry to alight. Everything was ready for the ceremony, and the bridal pair had long been expected; but, instead of stopping, the cow redoubled her speed. Thirteen times she ran round the church like lightning, then suddenly made her way in a straight line across the fields to the castle, with such force that the whole party were almost shaken to pieces before their arrival.

No more marriage was to be thought of for that day; but the tables were set and the dinner served, and the Baron Kerver was too noble a knight to take leave of his brave Bretons until they had eaten and drunk accordingly to custom—that is, from sunset till sunrise, and even a little later.

Orders were given for the guests to take their seats. Ninety-six tables were ranged in eight rows. In front of them, on a large platform covered with velvet, with a canopy in the middle, was a table larger than the rest, and loaded with fruit and flowers, to say nothing of the roast hares, and the peacocks smoking beneath their plumage. At this table the bridal pair were to be seated in full sight, in order that nothing might be lacking to the pleasures of the feast, and that the meanest peasant might have the honor of saluting them by emptying his cup of hydromel to their honor.

The baron seated the hundred knights at his table, and placed their squires behind their chairs to serve them. At his right he put the bride and Yvon, but he left the seat at his left vacant, and, calling a page, "Child," said he, "run to the house of the stranger lady who obliged us only too much this morning. It was not her fault if her success exceeded her good will. Tell her that the Baron Kerver thanks her for her help, and invites her to the wedding feast of his son Yvon."

On reaching the golden house, where Finette in tears was mourning for her beloved, the page bent one knee to the ground, and, in the baron's name, invited the stranger lady to the castle to do honor to the wedding of Lord Yvon.

"Thank your master for me," answered Finette, proudly, "and tell him that if he is too noble to come to my house, I am too noble to go to his."

When the page repeated this answer to his master, the Baron Kerver struck the table such a blow that three plates flew in the air.

"By my honor," said he, "this is spoken like a lady, and, for the first time, I own myself beaten. Quick, saddle my dun mare, and let my knights and squires prepare to attend me."

It was with this brilliant train that the baron alighted

at the door of the golden cottage. He begged Finette's pardon, held the stirrup for her, and seated her behind him on his own horse, neither more nor less than a duchess in person. On reaching the castle, he uncovered his head, and led her to the seat of honor that he had chosen for her.

The baron's departure had made a great excitement, and his return caused still greater surprise. Every one asked who the lady could be that the baron treated with such respect. The steward, the bailiff, and the seneschal were appealed to. The steward trembled, the bailiff turned pale, and the seneschal blushed, but all three were as mute as fishes. The silence of these important personages added to the general wonder.

All eyes were fixed on Finette, who felt a deadly chill at her heart, for Yvon saw, but did not know her. He cast an indifferent glance at her, then began again to talk in a tender tone to the fair-haired lady, who smiled disdainfully.

Finette, in despair, took from the purse the golden bullet, her last hope. While talking with the baron, who was charmed with her wit, she shook the little ball in her hand, and repeated, in a whisper,

"Golden bullet, precious treasure,
Save me, if it be thy pleasure."

And behold, the bullet grew larger and larger, until it became a goblet of chased gold, the most beautiful cup that ever graced the table of baron or king.

Finette filled the cup herself with spiced wine, and, calling the seneschal, who was cowering behind her, she said, in her gentlest tones, "My good seneschal, I entreat you to offer this goblet to Lord Yvon. I wish to drink his health, and I am sure he will not refuse me this pleasure."

Yvon took the goblet, which the seneschal presented to him, with a careless hand, bowed to the stranger, drank the wine, and, setting the cup on the table before him, turned to the fair-haired lady who occupied all his thoughts. The lady seemed anxious and vexed. He whispered a few words in her ear that seemed to please her, for her eyes sparkled, and she placed her hand again in his.

Finette cast down her head and began to weep. All was over.

"Children," cried the baron, in a voice of thunder, "fill your glasses. Let us all drink to the noble stranger who honors us with her presence. To the noble lady of the golden cottage!"

All began to huzzah and drink. Yvon contented himself with raising his goblet to a level with his eyes. Suddenly he started and stood mute, his mouth open

and his eyes fixed, like a man that has had a vision.

It was a vision. In the gold of the goblet Yvon saw his past life as in a mirror: the giant pursuing him; Finette dragging him along; both embarking in the ship that saved them; both landing on the shore of Brittany; he quitting her for an instant; she weeping at his departure. Where was she? By his side, of course. What other woman than Finette could be by the side of Yvon?

He turned toward the fair-haired lady, and cried out like a man treading on a serpent. Then, staggering as if he were drunk, he rose and looked around him with haggard eyes. At the sight of Finette he clasped his trembling hands, and, dragging himself toward her, fell on his knees and exclaimed, "Finette, forgive me!"

To forgive is the height of happiness. Before evening, Finette was seated by the side of Yvon, both weeping and smiling.

And what became of the fair-haired lady? No one knows. At the cry of Yvon she disappeared; but it was said that a wretched old hag was seen flying on a broomstick over the castle walls, chased by the dogs; and it was the common opinion among the Kervers that she was the fair-haired lady, the godmother of the giant.

The feast, interrupted for a moment, went on gayer than ever. Early the next morning they went to the church, where, to the joy of his heart, Yvon married Finette, who was no longer afraid of evil spirits; after which they ate, drank, and danced for thirty-six hours, without any one thinking of resting.

THOR'S WONDERFUL JOURNEY

THOR made many journeys and had many strange adventures; but there was one journey which was more wonderful than all the others, and which proves, moreover, that the strongest and truest are sometimes deceived by those who are weaker than themselves. The giants in old Norse times were not easy to conquer; but generally it was when they hid themselves behind lies and appeared to be what they were not that they succeeded for a time. Thor's strength was a noble thing because he used it to help men; but his truthfulness and honesty were nobler still.

One morning, just as the sun was beginning to shine through the mists that overhung the world, the gates of Asgard opened and Thor's chariot, drawn by the goats, rattled along the road. Thor and Loke were evidently off for a journey; but Thor was always going

off somewhere, and nobody who saw him now thought that he was starting out to try his strength with the most powerful things of the whole earth. Nor did he know it. All day long the chariot rolled across the level stretches of meadow and through the valleys, leaving the echoes shouting to each other from the overhanging mountains as it passed by. At night it stopped at the house of a poor peasant, and Thor stepped down and stood in the doorway.

"Can you lodge two travelers over night?" he asked.

"Certainly," said the peasant, "but we can give you nothing to eat, for we have nothing for ourselves."

"Give yourselves no trouble about that," answered Thor cheerfully; "I can provide for all."

He went back to Loke, who got out of the chariot; and then, to the great astonishment of the people in the house, Thor killed both his goats, and in a minute they were ready for cooking. The great pot was soon sending savory odors through the house, and the whole family with their strange guests sat down shortly to a bountiful supper.

"The more you eat the better I shall like it," said Thor, as they took their places at the table, "but do not on any account break the bones; when you have done with them throw them into the skins which I have spread out on the hearth."

The peasant and his wife and Thjalfe and Roskva, their two children, ate bountifully; but Thjalfe broke one of the bones to get the marrow. The next morning Thor was up with the sun, and when he dressed himself he took the hammer and held it over the goatskins: and immediately the bones flew into place, and the skins covered them, and there were the two goats as full of life as when they started out the day before. But one of the goats limped; and when Thor saw it he was so angry that he looked like a thundercloud, and his fingers closed so tightly round Mjolner that his knuckles were white. Thjalfe, who had been looking with the rest of the family in speechless wonder, was frightened half out of his wits when he saw Thor's rage, and would have run away if he could. The poor peasant and his wife were equally terrified, and besought Thor that he would not destroy them. Seeing them in such misery Thor's anger died out, and he said he would forgive them, but Thjalfe and Roskva must henceforth be his servants. So taking the two children, and leaving the goats with their parents for safe keeping, Thor and Loke set out again.

Thor had decided to go to Jotunheim, and all the morning they traveled eastward until they reached the shore of the sea. They crossed the wide waters quickly and climbed up on the further shore of Jotun-

heim. Mists floated over the land, and great rocks rose along the coast so stern and black from the wash of the sea and the fury of storms that they seemed like strong giants guarding their country against the giant-queller. Thor led the way, and they soon entered a deep forest through which they traveled until night-fall, Thjalfe, who was very fleet of foot, carrying the sack of provisions. As night came on they looked about for shelter, and came upon an immense building with a whole side opening into a great room off which they found five smaller rooms. This was just what he wanted, although they could not imagine why any one had built such a house in that lonely place. After supper, weary with the long journey, they were soon in a deep sleep.

Three or four hours went by quietly enough, but about midnight they were suddenly awakened by an awful uproar, which shook the building to its foundations and made the whole earth tremble. Thor called the others and told them to go into the further rooms. Half dead with fright they did so, but Thor stretched himself, hammer in hand, at the wide entrance. As soon as there was light enough to see about him Thor went into the woods, and had gone but a little way when he came upon an enormous giant, fast asleep, and snoring so loudly that the very trees shook around

him. Thor quickly buckled on his belt of strength, and had no sooner done so than the giant awoke and sprang to his feet. The whole earth shook under him, and he towered as far over Thor, as a great oak does over the fern that grows at its foot. Thor was never frightened, but he had never heard of such a giant before and he looked at him with honest surprise.

"Who are you?" he said, after looking up to the great face a minute.

"I am Skrymer," answered the giant, "but I don't need to ask your name. You are Thor. But what have you done with my glove?"

And stretching out his great hand the giant picked up his glove, which was nothing less than the building Thor and the others had spent the night in.

"Would you like to have me travel with you?" continued the giant.

"Certainly," said Thor, although it was plainly to be seen that neither Thjalfe nor Roskva wanted such a companion. Skrymer thereupon untied his sack and took out his breakfast, and the others followed his example, taking care, however, to put a comfortable distance between themselves and their dangerous fellow-traveler. After breakfast Skrymer proposed that they should put all their provisions into one bag, to which Thor consented, and they started off, the giant

tramping on ahead, and carrying the sack on his broad back.

All day long he walked steadily on, taking such tremendous strides that the others could hardly keep up with him. When night came he stopped under a great oak.

"There," said he, throwing down the sack; "take that and get some supper; I am going to sleep."

The words were hardly out of his mouth before he began to snore as loudly as the night before. Thor took the sack, but the harder he tried to loosen the string the tighter it drew, and with all his strength he could not untie a single knot. Finding he could not get into the sack, and hearing the giant snore so peacefully at his side, Thor's anger blazed out, and grasping the hammer he struck the giant full on the head. Skyrmer opened his eyes drowsily.

"Did a leaf fall on my head?" he called out sleepily, without getting up. "Have you had your supper yet, and are you going to bed?"

In a minute he was snoring again. Thor went and lay down under another oak; but at midnight the giant began to snore so heavily that the forest resounded with the noise. Thor was fairly beside himself with rage, and swinging his hammer struck Skyrmer such a

tremendous blow that the hammer sank to the handle in his head. The giant opened his eyes and sat up.

"What is the matter now?" he called out; "did an acorn fall on my head? How are you getting on, Thor?"

"Oh, I am just awake," said Thor, stepping back quickly. "It is only midnight, and we may sleep awhile longer."

Thor watched until the giant had fallen asleep again, and just at daybreak dealt him the most terrible blow that he had ever given with the hammer. It flashed through and buried itself out of sight in Skyrmer's forehead. The giant sprang to his feet and began to stroke his beard.

"Are there any birds up there?" he asked, looking into the oak. "I thought a feather dropped on my head. Are you awake, Thor? It is full time to dress, and you are near the end of your journey. The city of Utgard is not far off. I heard you whispering together that I was a man of great stature, but you will find much larger men in Utgard. Take my advice, and when you get there don't boast very much, for they will not take boasting from such little fellows as you are. You would do well to turn back and go home while you have a chance; but if you will go on, take

the road to the eastward,—my way takes me to the north." And, swinging the sack of provisions over his shoulder, Skyrmer plunged into the forest and was soon out of sight.

Thor and his companions pushed on as fast as they could until noon, when suddenly a great city rose before them, on a vast plain, the walls of which were so high that they had to lean back as far as they could to see the top. A great gate, heavily barred, stopped them at the entrance; but they crept between the bars. After going a little distance they came upon a palace, and the doors being open went in, and found themselves in a great hall with long seats on either side, and on these seats rows of gigantic men larger than Skyrmer. When they saw Utgard-Loke, who was the king of that country, they saluted him; but he sat for a long time without taking any notice of them. At last smiling contemptuously he said: "It is tiresome for travelers to be asked about a long journey; but if I am not mistaken this little fellow is Thor. Perhaps, however, you are really larger than you seem to be. What feats of strength can you show us? No one is permitted to stay here unless he excels in some difficult thing."

Hearing these words, in a very insulting tone, Loke answered loudly, "There is one feat in which no one

can equal me, and I am ready to perform it at once. I can devour food faster than any one here."

"Truly, that would be a feat if you could do it," said the scornful king; and he called to a man named Loge to contend with Loke.

A great trough full of meat was placed in the center of the hall, and commencing at either end the contestants began to eat voraciously, and so fast that it is disagreeable even to think of it. They reached the middle of the trough at exactly the same moment; but Loke had eaten only the meat, while Loge had devoured meat, bones, trough and all. There was nothing left on his side, and Loke had to confess himself beaten.

Then the king, looking at Thjalfe, asked, "What can you do, young man?"

"I will run a race with any one you will select," answered Thjalfe promptly.

"If you can outrun any one I can select, it will certainly be a splendid feat," said Utgard-Loke; "but you must be very swift-footed to do it."

There was a noble race-ground just outside the palace, and every one hurried out to see the race. The king called a slender young fellow named Huge, and told him to run with Thjalfe.

There was never such running since the world be-

gan. Thjalfe ran like the wind: but Huge reached the goal first, and turned about to meet Thjalfe as he came breathless to the post.

"You must use your legs better than that if you intend to win," said the king, as Thjalfe walked back; "although you are the fastest runner that ever came here."

They ran a second time, but when Huge reached the goal and turned around, Thjalfe was a full bow-shot behind.

"Well run!" shouted Utgard-Loke; "well run! a third race shall decide it."

A third time they were at the starting-place and again they were speeding down the course, while everybody strained his eyes to look at them; and a third time Huge reached the goal and turned to find Thjalfe not half-way.

"We have had racing enough!" cried the giants, and they all went back into the palace again.

And now it was Thor's turn to show his wonderful strength; but he did not dream that he was going to measure strength with the most tremendous forces in the whole earth.

"Your fame fills all the worlds, Thor," called out Utgard-Loke, when they had seated themselves on the

benches along the great hall; "give us some proof of your wonderful power."

Thor never waited to be asked a second time.

"I will contend in drinking with any one you may select," was his prompt acceptance of the challenge.

"Well answered," said the king. "Bring out the great horn."

A giant went out, and speedily came back bearing a very deep horn, which the king said his men were compelled to empty as a punishment.

"A good drinker will empty that horn at a single draught," said Utgard-Loke, as it was filled and handed to Thor; "a few men need to drink twice, but only a milksop needs a third pull at it."

Thor thought the horn not over large, although very long, and as he was very thirsty he put it to his lips without further ado, and drank so long and deep that he thought it certainly must be empty, but when he set the horn down and looked into it he was astonished to find that the liquor rose almost as high as when he set his lips to it.

"That was fairly well drunk," said the king, "but not unusually so; if anybody had told me Thor could do no better than that I would not have believed him. But of course you will finish it at a second draught."

Thor said nothing, although he was very angry, but setting the horn to his lips a second time he drank longer and deeper than before. When he had stopped to take breath, and looked at it again, he had drunk less than the first time.

"How now, Thor," cried Utgard-Loke, "you have left more for the third draught than you can manage. If there are no other feats which you can perform better than this you must not expect to be considered as great here as among the gods."

Thor became very angry when he heard these words, and seizing the horn he drank deep, fast, and furiously until he thought it certainly must be empty; but when he looked into it the liquor had fallen so little that he could hardly see the difference; and he handed it to the cup-bearer, and would drink no more.

"It is plain," spoke up the king in a very insulting tone, "that you are not so strong as we thought you were; you cannot succeed in this strife, certainly; will you try something else?"

"I will certainly try something else," said Thor, who could not understand why he had failed to drain the horn; "but I am sure that even among the gods such draughts would not be counted small. What game do you propose now?"

"Oh, a very easy one," replied the king, "which my

youngsters here make nothing of; simply to lift a cat from the floor. I should not think of asking you to try it if I did not see that you are much less of a man than I have always supposed."

He had no sooner said this than a large gray cat ran out into the hall. Thor put his hand under it and tried to lift it, but the cat arched its back as high as Thor stretched his hands, and, do his best, he could only get one foot off the floor.

"It is just as I expected," cried Utgard-Loke in a loud voice; "the cat is very large, and Thor is a very little fellow compared with the rest of us."

Thor's eyes flashed fire. "Little as I am," he shouted, "I challenge any of you to wrestle with me."

Utgard-Loke looked up and down the benches as if he would call out some one from the two rows of giants. Then he shook his head, saying; "There is no one here who would not think it child's play to wrestle with you; but let some one call in Ellie, my old nurse; she shall try her strength with you. She has brought many a stronger man than you to earth."

An old woman came creeping into the hall, bent, wrinkled, and toothless. Thor seized her, but the tighter his grasp became the firmer she stood. Her thin arms gripped him like a vise, her strength seemed to grow as she put it forth, and at last after a hard

struggle, in which Thor strained every muscle to the breaking point, he sank on one knee.

"That is enough," said Utgard-Loke, and the old woman crept feebly out of the hall, leaving Thor stunned and bewildered in the midst of the silent giants. There were no more trials of strength, and Thor and his companions were generously feasted after their defeats.

The next morning, after they had partaken of a bountiful breakfast of meat and drink, they started on their journey homeward. Utgard-Loke went with them as far as the gate of the city, where he stopped.

"How do you think your journey has turned out?" he asked Thor; "and have you met any men stronger than yourself?"

"I have brought shame upon myself," answered Thor frankly and honestly, after his nature, "and it vexes me to think that you will hereafter speak of me as a weak fellow."

"Now that you are out of the city I will tell you the truth about these things," said Utgard-Loke. "If I had known how mighty you are I would never have allowed you to enter the gates, and you may be sure you will never get in a second time. I have beaten you by deception, not by strength. I have been deluding

you from the start. In the forest I tied the sack with a tough iron wire in such a way you could not discern the secret of the knot. Thrice you struck at me with your hammer, and the first blow, though the lightest, would have killed me had it fallen on me; but each time I slipped a mountain between myself and the hammer, and the blows made three deep clefts in its stony sides. I have deluded you, too, in all the trials of strength and skill. Loke was very hungry, and ate voraciously, but he contended against fire itself, which goes like the wind and devours everything in its path; Thjalfe ran as man never ran before, but Huge, who raced with him, was no other than my thought, and what man is so swift as thought? The horn which you strove in vain to empty had its further end in the sea, and so mighty were your draughts that over the wide seas the waters have sunk to the ebb. Your strength was no less wonderful when you lifted the cat; when we saw one foot raised from the floor our hearts sank in terror, for it was the Midgard-serpent, encircling the whole earth, which you really contended against, and you held it aloft so near heaven that the world was hardly enclosed by its folds. Most marvelous of all was the wrestling with Ellie, who was none other than old age itself, who sooner or later must bring all things to

the ground. We must part, I hope never to meet again; for I can only defend myself against you by spells of magic such as these."

Thor was so enraged when he heard these words that he swung his hammer high in air to crush the lying Utgard-Loke, but he had vanished, and when Thor turned to look for the city he saw only a beautiful plain spreading its blossoming meadows to the far mountains; and he went thoughtfully back to Asgard.

THE HERO TWINS

THERE was once a woman who had two sons and they were twins, so much alike that the mother herself could not tell one from the other. So Hunapu always wore a crimson feather and Balanque a blue one.

As children they spent their days in the open air, playing in the forest, swimming in the lake, and wandering on the plains, and so doing they came to know the animals and the birds, finding the young ones and playing with them, so that it was no uncommon sight to see them come home with a panther following at their heels as a dog does. They knew where to find the nests of birds of all kinds, fed the young ones, and petted them, until with a call they could bring from the trees clouds of glorious-colored birds which would perch on their hands and arms and shoulders. And of course it came about in time that when animals and

birds gathered about the lads, there was no more fighting between the wild creatures than there is between a puppy and a kitten that have been raised together.

Growing up with the wild creatures, wrestling with them and racing with them, the boys grew strong and fleet of foot. They could scale a cliff to reach a condor's nest or climb a tree as swiftly as a monkey, and in the water they were as much at home as on the land. Down into the clear depths they would dive, down in the cool, green lake waters, to bring up shells and bright stones, one boy striving with the other, laughing merrily the while. And sitting on the shore in the sunshine they would often look across the lake to the far-away mountain, talking about the time when they would adventure there to see what could be seen.

Their father taught them to shoot straight with the arrow and to use well the spear, and when they were masters of these he made them breastplates of silver and light helmets that flashed in the sun. And as time went on they wandered here and there, finding other boys of their own age, and these, too, had helmets and breastplates of silver made for them by their fathers and had learned the use of the bow and spear, until at last there was a band of four hundred of which Hunapu and Balanque were leaders. Then there were great times with running and racing and swimming

and wrestling, and soon the Four Hundred had agreed that when one of their number was in trouble not of his own seeking, at the sound of the horn the rest would come to his rescue. But not all the time was spent in play, for the band of the Four Hundred were wise in all the arts, playing the flute, working in metals, painting, woodcraft, and other like activities.

One day Hunapu and Balanque were in the forest gathering fruit, when there came to them an old man and wife, weeping sadly. They were strangers to the place and, seeing the two lads in their armor of silver, with bows in their hands and swords by their sides and feathers of crimson and of blue in their glittering helmets, they stood for a while silent. But being asked, they told their tale of how they had lived in the mountain on the other side of the lake among a people who were in terror of their lives because of three great and fearful giants who came now and then, taking the cattle and the goats, destroying for mere mischief the houses of the people, and sometimes killing the people themselves. Nothing, they said, could withstand the strength of the giants. Stone walls were as mere sticks to them. They uprooted trees or turned the course of rivers by scooping away masses of earth with their hands.

Hearing that, the twin brothers were greatly dis-

turbed, for as they had sat by the lake sometimes, talking of the land far away, they had heard strange noises faintly come over the waters, which they had set down as summer thunders. With the tale of the old man and his wife, they began to believe that things were more serious than they had supposed. Stepping to a place clear of trees Hunapu put his horn to his lips and blew long and loudly, three times. Soon from all directions came lads running, each girt with his sword, his spear in hand and his bow at his back, breastplate and helmet glittering in the bright sun. You can figure for yourself that fine band of clean, straight-limbed fellows, each with his sword drawn and silver helmet with drooping plume. You can imagine how they looked standing there with the cool, green forest behind them. And there were not only the Four Hundred, but also their friends of the forest, here a puma, there a panther or deer, bright-colored birds, glorious humming-birds and proud llamas, for not a boy but had his wild creature for a pet.

To the band of the Four Hundred the old man and his wife told their tale, mentioning what they had not done before, that their sons and daughters had been carried off by two of the giants. At that there stepped from the ranks a lad with flashing eyes who said that

not a year should pass over their heads before the giants were overcome, and a great shout of joy went up. Then and there the lad who had spoken cried:

"Let every one step forward who will go to the land of the evil three," and no sooner were the words out of his lips than the whole Four Hundred stepped forward. But, as Flashing Eyes said, some must stay at home, for there were things to be done, so he proposed that twenty alone should go. Even then there was no way to decide which of them should be of the twenty, for every one wanted to go forward to the adventure. At that Balanque offered to go alone to the land, to see what would be the best plan to pursue, but again there was trouble, for each of the Four Hundred wanted to go with him. So at last it was decided to leave the matter to be settled by chance. Each one was to call to his pet wild creature, and the first two touched would go to the land of the giants. Then a great calling went up, a naming of names, a whistling, and a making of noises like the call of animals, and from the leafy caves came the pets, running, leaping, flying. Each lad there had hung his sword and bow on a branch and stood with arms outstretched to welcome his pet, and there was much laughter and good spirit. Down from the sky came sweeping a hawk, straight as an arrow, and it lit on the shoulder of Ba-

lanque. At the very same moment a llama thrust its nose into the neck of Hunapu, and that only a second before a fleet deer had leaped to the side of Flashing Eyes. So all there knew that the twin brothers were chosen to go into the land and there was no more arguing about it. That night the band slept under the brilliant stars and the next morning there went up a great shout as at sunrise the brothers set off, every one of the Four Hundred knocking his sword on his shield by way of salute. From the top of a ridge the twins waved their band a farewell, then they turned and a moment later were lost to view, and the members of the band went each about his own affairs, ready to come at a call.

All that day and the next they traveled, and on the morning of the third day they came to a place where were great black rocks, and hills all treeless and bare, and near the noon hour they saw a great cave in the mountainside, the floor of which was strewn with bones of animals, some of the bones indeed being great things as big as a man, from a creature of which the boys had never seen the like. These bones had been cracked for the marrow in them and the teeth marks told their tale of the size of the giant who had eaten them.

To the top of the mountain the boys climbed, and

when they had gained the summit, there at their feet was a great hollow place and at the other end sat a monstrous fellow, his hands on his knees, his body swaying to and fro. He was rumbling and grumbling and peering here and there in a queer way. The boys noticed that he did not turn his head to look with a sweep of the eyes as they did, or as you do, turning to see in a semi-circle or over a greater extent. His way was different. He would turn his head in a certain direction with his eyes closed, then open them and look. From the place where his glance lit he could not turn. If he wanted to look somewhere else, he had to close his eyes and begin again, so that his looking was more like shooting a bullet at a mark than anything else, and if he missed, he missed, and had to begin again. And of course he often missed. Yet it was his way, and he must have been very satisfied with it to judge by the song he sang, which was this:

"My name is Cakix,
Yukub—Cakix.
My eyes are bright as silver,
They gleam like precious stones.
My name is Cakix,
Yukub—Cakix,
Cakix!
Cakix!"

Over and over again he sang that. Then, with a tremendous roar, he shouted:

"I am Cakix,
Yukub—Cakix,
And all men fear me!"

Then the twins, hearing that idle boast, stood on the hill-top and shouted:

"Catch us, Cakix, if you can. We come to make an end of you."

For a moment the giant sat still in sheer astonishment, his eyes closed, his ear cupped in his hand to catch the direction of the sound. The boys saw his great face turn in their direction, and they skipped to the right and left so as to be out of his sight, and well it was that they did so, for out over the valley shot his arm, lengthening like elastic, and his great fingers reached over the rock where the twins had stood, and went feeling like five blind snakes. Finding nothing, the hand picked up the rock, though it was as large as a house, and back went the arm getting shorter, until the giant had the rock under his nose. Then he shut his eyes, turned his face down, opened his eyes again, and examined the rock. Finding nothing he cast it away with a sudden jerk, much as you jerk off some insect that drops on your hand unexpectedly. Cakix

sat awhile, then rose to his feet and strode straight down the valley to where the boys had been, looking straight ahead, of course. He went to a tree a little way off, plucked some fruit which looked like wild cherries, though each was as large as a pumpkin, and blundered off without seeing the boys who crouched low and out of his sight.

As soon as the giant had gone the twins ran down into the valley and there they saw, in great caves in the hills to the right and left, hidden heaps of flashing, precious stones—diamonds, emeralds, rubies, opals —dazzling in the sunshine. In other holes were heaped gold dust and silver. While looking they were startled to hear a new roaring, this time from the hill to which Cakix had gone. Soon the roar formed into words and they heard:

"I am Cabrakan,
Cabrakan who shakes the earth,
Cabrakan who shakes the sky.
I am Cabrakan,
Master of men."

It was another giant, but him they did not see. Scrambling out of the valley they reached the hilltop to see Cakix coming back to his valley. He stopped at the tree where he had stopped before and took some

more fruit, then strode down the hill, marking time as he walked with his:

"I am Ca-kix
Yu-kub—Ca-kix
All men fear me."

He sat down in his old seat, his hands again on his knees, his body swaying. He seemed uncomfortable and restless, much as if he expected danger, getting to his feet every now and then, peering about, going to his tree to eat fruit and returning again to his seat. In fact, about every hour he went to his fruit tree.

Seeing that, the lads had an idea, and running to the fruit tree, climbed into it, hiding themselves in the thick branches, but no sooner were they safely there than they heard the monster coming.

In a very short while they felt the tree shake with the giant's heavy tread, for he was on his way to take another meal. Then in less time than it takes to count six he was at the tree, his great blue face hiding the scenery. Quick as lightning, Hunapu fitted an arrow to his bow, drew the string to his bow, and let fly. The shaft struck the ugly fellow in the chin, but so tough was his skin that the barb only pierced to his jaw. Back he went to his valley and threw himself

down, groaning and weeping. There was no loud song from him now.

The boys descended from their tree and marched down to where Cakix lay, taking good care to keep out of the way of his great kicking feet.

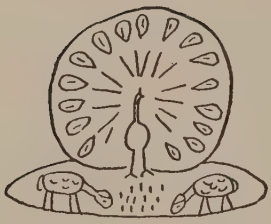
"Who are you?" asked the giant when he saw them. "And what do you want here?"

"We are doctors," they answered. "Hearing you roar with pain, we came to help. It is your teeth that need attention. Let us take out your bad teeth and you will be at ease."

"But my teeth are my strength," said the giant. "Men do not know it," he added with the lack of suspicion of all giants.

"True," answered the twins. "We will pull out the old teeth and put new ones in their place."

The giant opened his mouth and to work they went with hammers and bars of iron, and in a short time had his teeth all out. True to their promise they put new teeth in place of the old, but the new teeth they fitted were made of grains of corn, and as soon as Cakix tried to eat with them he found out his error. So in a short while he died from starvation, and the earth was rid of one of the monsters.

There was great joy among the band of Four Hun-

dred when the hero brothers returned and told their story, for they were glad of the good fortune of the twins and full of rejoicing that the world had one monster the less in it.